



UPDATE ON OMICRON GUIDANCE

1/6/2022

Happy New Year! We hope you and your loved ones are safe and healthy and that you were able to find some time to enjoy the holidays.

On December 21, 2021, AGMA issued an [Emergency Guidance on Omicron Surge](#) to help AGMA Artists and companies continue live performances – especially holiday performances. We know this was a challenging time for many of you and that breakthrough infections occurred. Many AGMA companies, however, were able to complete their holiday productions with these extra safeguards in place.

We write now to update and reinforce the AGMA Expert Medical Advisory Board's recommendations. We encourage AGMA Artists and companies to adhere to these guidelines until further notice, as most experts believe that transmission of the Omicron variant will increase in the short term before tapering off significantly in the weeks ahead.

- **Vaccinations.** All company staff and Artists should be fully vaccinated, with “fully vaccinated” meaning they have had all recommended doses of the original vaccine plus a booster (as soon as possible). Booster shots have proven to be especially helpful in preventing serious illness from Omicron.
- **Masks.** Masks should always be worn, including during performance when feasible. Please note that the fit and quality of the mask counts! AGMA's Medical Advisory Board recommends KN95, KF94, or similar types of well-fitting masks.
- **Testing.** Testing should be increased to three (3) times per week depending on the intensity of the rehearsal and/or performance schedule. Either PCR or Rapid Antigen tests are acceptable, or a combination of the two.
- **Isolation/Quarantine.** AGMA Artists and companies can generally follow the January 4, 2022, [CDC Guidelines for Isolation and Quarantine](#) with the following adjustments designed to better protect AGMA Artists:
 - *COVID positive cases:* Anyone who develops COVID symptoms¹ or who tests positive for COVID-19 must **isolate** for a minimum of five (5) days from testing positive or onset of symptoms and until symptoms resolve without fever medication.

- They can return to the workplace on Day 6 if they receive a negative rapid antigen or a PCR² test and they continue to wear a well-fitting mask for five (5) additional days (days 6-10).
 - BUT if no test is taken or available, AGMA Artists should remain isolated until Day 7 and return to the workplace no sooner than Day 8 wearing a mask until after Day 10.
- *Close contact exposure cases:* Anyone who is a close contact of a positive case no longer needs to quarantine under the CDC guidelines *unless* they develop symptoms or test positive AND
 - They have received all recommended vaccine doses, including boosters.
 - They wear a mask around others for ten (10) days.
 - A COVID test taken five (5) days after exposure is negative.
 - BUT if the exposed individual is unvaccinated or only partially vaccinated, they should quarantine for five (5) days, get tested five (5) days following exposure, and wear a mask for ten (10) days while around others.
- **Reinforce the Basics.** The fundamental safety protocols of the [AGMA/SDC Return to Stage and Performing Arts Playbook](#) should continue to be reviewed and enforced.

As always, your AGMA staff representatives are available to answer any questions and to discuss the implementation of these recommendations. We wish you all a healthy start to the new year.

NOTES:

1. *Symptoms: Fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting and diarrhea. Note: Omicron symptoms may be milder - runny nose, headache, fatigue, sneezing, and a sore throat.*
2. *Rapid antigen test is preferred because of the rapid turn around and because PCR tests can remain positive for days or weeks following resolution of Covid. Nonetheless, a negative PCR test is acceptable prior to return to work.*