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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Taney County Health Department Endorses the End of Masking for Fully Vaccinated Individuals in Most Settings.

The Taney County Health Department (TCHD) has endorsed The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention's announcement that fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear masks or physically distance except where required. TCHD does want to remind the public that masking should still be observed when required by law and in all businesses and workplaces that require masking for entry.

This announcement is based on recent scientific data showing that:

- Case rates in the country have come down by 1/3 likely due to the scale up vaccinations in the last 2 weeks
- New science is showing that the vaccine is working in the real world setting just as well as it did in the trials, and it is effective against the variants
- The science is showing that fully vaccinated people are not getting asymptomatic COVID and are not transmitting it to unvaccinated people
- The vaccine is now available to everyone who is eligible to receive one

“Nearly 120 Million Americans are now fully vaccinated. All science-based evidence points to vaccination being the safest and most effective way for Americans to return to normal life.” states Lisa Marshall, Director of the Taney County Health Department, “Vaccines work and they replace the need for vaccinated individuals to wear a mask and social distance.”

The vaccinated community is asked to continue to respect local businesses' choice to keep policies in place that require masking as a means to protect their business, their employees, and their patrons. In many cases, refusing to wear a mask in these establishments may qualify as trespassing even for vaccinated individuals. Additionally, fully vaccinated individuals may choose to continue to wear a mask when out in public.

The CDC recommends that immunocompromised individuals consult with their physician regarding mask use even if they are fully vaccinated.

Fully vaccinated individuals should continue to get tested if they are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and follow CDC recommendations and guidelines.

Vaccines are readily available through the Taney County Health Department, for more information or to schedule an appointment, please call 417-334-4544 ext 570 visit our website at www.taneycohealth.org, or like our FaceBook, Instagram and Pinterest pages.

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The Taney County Health Department envisions a community of healthy people. Every day, we work to achieve this vision through leadership, collaboration, education and service. We value integrity, learning, teamwork, positive communication, quality improvement and dedicated service. Please visit our website <http://www.taneycohealth.org> to learn more about our services.