



**From the desk of
Victor Peoples, Director of Health and Service Initiatives**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Greetings Brothers:

We recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has not ended and that many are concerned about their health and that of their family members, especially considering rising case numbers and the more infectious Delta variant of SARS-CoV2. The approach to safety outlined below meets or exceeds current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and professional organization guidance and has the support of our own public health and medical experts.

The spread of Delta is largely a reflection of the uneven vaccination coverage in the U.S., with substantially higher numbers of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths among states with low vaccination rates and limited public health mitigation measures. What is increasingly clear is that breakthrough infections remain infrequent but are occurring with the Delta variant; however, the currently available vaccines remain highly effective against severe disease, hospitalization, and death. In other words, most severe cases occurring in the U.S. are among unvaccinated individuals. While breakthrough infections (infections among those who are fully vaccinated) have increased due to the Delta variant, we know that vaccines significantly reduce the risk of being infected and greatly reduce the likelihood of getting severely ill, even with this variant.

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. Learn how COVID-19 spreads and practice these actions to help prevent the spread of this illness.

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Wear a mask to protect yourself and others and stop the spread of COVID-19.
- Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) from others who don't live with you.
- Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces. The more people you are in contact with, the more likely you are to be exposed to COVID-19.
- Get a COVID-19 vaccine when it's available to you.
- Clean your hands often, either with soap and water for 20 seconds or a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean frequently touched objects and surfaces daily. If someone is sick or has tested positive for COVID-19, disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Monitor your health daily.

If you have not yet made the decision to be vaccinated, please talk with your physicians, family, friends, and neighbors who have and please consider vaccinating yourself and vaccinating your children when they become eligible. Hundreds of millions of people in the United States and around the world have successfully and safely taken one of the available vaccines and, while on the rare occasion a breakthrough infection does occur, the severity of illness and mortality of the disease is greatly, greatly reduced.

The health and safety of our families and brothers is of the highest concern, we recognize that these are trying and stressful times for our brothers. If you are fully vaccinated, you can resume some of the activities that you did prior to the pandemic. Let's beat this thing together, in the spirit of community and caring, that has made this brotherhood great.

In Brotherhood

Victor K. Peoples, Director of Health and Service Initiatives