

Mumbai- BMC announces new guidelines amid rising Omicron cases in Maharashtra. Read here

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Due to a rise in the cases of coronavirus due to the highly transmissible Omicron variant, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) on Saturday urged people to avoid crowding and follow Covid-19 guidelines.

The Mumbai civic body also warned of strict action against offenders. BMC commissioner Iqbal Chahal has appealed people to avoid gatherings on Christmas and New Year.

In a revised guideline, the BMC has said that squads will be deployed at ward level to take action against violators. It also reiterated adhering to Covid-19 rules during weddings and other ceremonies.

The city civic body has appealed people to adhere to rules in hotels, restaurants, cinemas, and shopping malls.

In its revised guidelines, the BMC said:

- In closed spaces, people upto 50% capacity allowed.
- In open spaces, people upto 25% capacity allowed.
- If a gathering with over 1,000 people is planned, prior permission of Local Disaster Management Authority is must.

"Use a mask properly, get fully vaccinated. A new variant of the COVID-19 virus called Omicron is spreading rapidly around the world, putting a strain on the health system. Despite repeated appeals by the government and administration to prevent a probable third wave, it has been observed that guidelines are not being followed properly in most places, especially in wedding functions and other ceremonies," Chahal said.

"Those violating COVID-19 rules will be dealt with severely by civic ward level teams as well as the police," the BMC chief said, adding that the outbreak situation in the metropolis was under control at present due to the cooperation of citizens as well as the excellent management and speed of the vaccination drive.

The spread of Omicron had once again forced several nations to impose lockdown and other prohibitory measures, and the Union and state governments were continuously asking people to be vigilant to prevent a similar situation in India, he said.

In a veiled reference to Bollywood parties amid reports that some actors had contracted the virus, Chahal said celebrities and eminent personalities who have an influence on society, must act accordingly and be aware of issues.

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The BMC chief said guidelines issued by the Maharashtra government on November 27 as well as Mumbai police notifications warning of action against violators under IPC and Epidemic Diseases Act must be followed strictly by people.

"In the near future, the risk of COVID-19 virus spread may increase if ceremonies and functions are held on the occasion of Christmas and New Year. There is need to curb the growing crowd at weddings and other ceremonies. Moreover, hotels, restaurants and other public establishments have also found to be flouting Covid-19 norms," he said, and asked all stakeholders to adhere to guidelines strictly.

Chahal asked citizens to get both doses of the coronavirus vaccine as quickly as possible, warning that action will be taken if staff functioning at public places or establishments as well as attendees at events, ceremonies are found to be not fully vaccinated as it is must.