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Apple shuts all NYC stores to shoppers as Omicron cases surge ||Business Connect|| 2021-12-28 13:50:27

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Apple shuts all NYC stores to shoppers as Omicron cases surge

Apple Inc has closed all of its 12 New York City stores to indoor shopping as cases of the Omicron coronavirus variant surged across the United States.

Customers will be able to pick up online orders at the stores, an Apple spokesperson said on Monday.

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The affected stores include outlets at Fifth Avenue, Grand Central and SoHo.

“We regularly monitor conditions and we will adjust both our health measures and store services to support the wellbeing of customers and employees,” the company said in a statement.

Earlier this month, Apple said it had temporarily closed three stores in the United States and Canada after a rise in COVID-19 cases and exposures among the stores’ employees.

For the same reason, Apple also mandated that all its customers and employees wear masks at its US stores.

The New York shutdown is a different approach for the company as it is still letting customers place orders online and pick them up at the stores. Shoppers will not be able to enter the store to browse or purchase anything on site, and technical support from the Genius Bar will not be available.

Covid cases have spiked to all-time highs in New York, with the state reporting tens of thousands of new cases a day. Apple also has closed additional retail stores outside of New York in recent days, such as some locations in Los Angeles. That includes its downtown Los Angeles Tower Theatre store.

Apple did not say when its New York locations would reopen to shoppers. The company has also temporarily shut its Carnegie Library store in Washington, DC, and some locations in Ohio, Texas, Georgia, and Florida. Its Regent Street store in London has temporarily closed as well.

Globally, concerns over the Omicron variant have prompted major companies to tighten protocols.

A US court earlier this month ordered the reinstatement of a nationwide vaccine-or-testing COVID-19 mandate for large businesses, which covers 80 million American workers. Opponents of the move have rushed to the Supreme Court to overturn the reinstatement.

Apple shares closed up 2.3 percent at $180.33.

