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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Health Department Urges COVID-19 Vaccinations for Eligible Adolescents before the Start of the New School Year**

**DuPage County**— According to the latest Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 vaccination data, 81 percent of eligible residents 12 years and older have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, and 65 percent are fully vaccinated. Additionally, 98 percent of DuPage County residents ages 65 years and older have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, and 82 percent are fully vaccinated. Despite the successful vaccination rates in DuPage County, health officials continue to encourage parents of school-aged children 12 years and older to get their children fully vaccinated against COVID-19 before the beginning of the school year.

“We all want to see students safely return to in-person learning this upcoming school year. By getting them fully vaccinated against COVID-19, they will be able to focus on the experiences that matter most,” said Karen Ayala, Executive Director of DuPage County Health Department. “COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. Millions of people in the United States have received COVID-19 vaccines under the most intense safety monitoring in U.S. history. Since it takes about five weeks to achieve full vaccination and protection, we are urging parents to get their children 12 years and older vaccinated as soon as possible to help keep them and their friends safe this school year.”

Students who are fully vaccinated by the beginning of the school year will not be required to quarantine if exposed to someone with COVID-19, leading to fewer disruptions to their ability to attend school, participate in sports, or spend time with their friends. Additionally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated the K-12 [Schools Guidance](#) last week. This guidance was [adopted](#) by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), which recommends schools maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms, combined with indoor mask-wearing by people who are not fully vaccinated to reduce transmission risk.

Next week, DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) will move the COVID-19 Community Vaccination Clinic at the DuPage County Fairgrounds

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to the Health Department's Central Public Health Center (CPHC) located at 111 North County Farm Road in Wheaton. Therefore, Saturday, July 17, will be the last day vaccines are administered at the DuPage County Fairgrounds in Wheaton. Beginning Monday, July 19, COVID-19 vaccinations will be available on a walk-in basis Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm at CPHC. Visitors are encouraged to save time by pre-registering. To view the clinic hours or learn more, visit [dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccineclinic](https://dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccineclinic).

To further support vaccination efforts, the DCHD Care Van is providing free COVID-19 vaccinations to communities in Naperville, Elmhurst, and Glendale Heights this week. The clinic is open to all people 12 years or older and offers the Pfizer or Johnson and Johnson vaccine. View this week's mobile clinic schedule [here](#). DuPage County municipalities, businesses, and community-based organizations interested in requesting an on-site mobile vaccination clinic for their community should complete this DCHD form or learn more at [dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccinemobile](https://dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccinemobile).

Any DuPage County residents who are homebound or who cannot safely leave their residence to visit a vaccination clinic are eligible to be vaccinated through our homebound vaccination program and should register at [dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccineregistration](https://dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccineregistration), or call (630) 682-7400 for assistance.

Currently, COVID-19 community transmission in DuPage County remains at a "moderate" level. Still, individuals who are not fully vaccinated or are immunocompromised should continue practicing [preventive measures](#) as they are at greater risk of contracting the more transmissible variants, some of which are more likely to lead to severe outcomes. As the more dangerous Delta variant continues spreading throughout the country and Illinois, COVID-19 cases are beginning to rise again in areas with lower vaccination rates. Therefore, there is an increasing urgency for people to get vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as possible to help protect themselves and others. With more than 250 vaccination sites in DuPage County, there are many options and opportunities to get vaccinated. To find a COVID-19 vaccine provider near you, visit [www.vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov).

In addition, to help interrupt and prevent community spread, persons with COVID-19 infection need to self-isolate (e.g., stay home except for medical care) and their close contacts need to self-quarantine and get tested unless they have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or have had COVID-19 infection within three months of exposure. Updated recommendations on masking based on vaccination status and setting are available at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html).

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Additional COVID-19 vaccine information about local efforts, frequently asked questions, vaccination data, and more is available at [www.dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccine](http://www.dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccine).

For general questions about COVID-19 and Illinois' response and guidance, call 1-800-889-3931 or email [DPH.SICK@ILLINOIS.GOV](mailto:DPH.SICK@ILLINOIS.GOV).

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