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Established in 1945, DuPage County Health Department promotes physical and emotional health; prevents illness injury and disability; protects health from environmental risk factors, and strives to assure the provision of accessible, quality service.

July 21, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Health Department Urges Residents to Practice Preventive Measures as COVID-19 Activity Increases in DuPage County

DuPage County— The DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) is reporting a 75 percent increase in COVID-19 cases and a 44 percent increase in COVID-19 hospitalizations over the past week among DuPage County residents. Currently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is projecting that the Delta variant comprises over 83 percent of new COVID-19 cases across the country and creates a higher level of risk for unvaccinated people. In DuPage County, a notable increase in Delta variant cases has also been identified. Thus, DCHD urges unvaccinated residents 12 years and older to get vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as possible.

COVID-19 vaccinations are safe and highly effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalization, and death in those who are fully vaccinated. In DuPage County, over 99 percent of COVID-19 cases and over 99.9 percent of hospitalizations and deaths related to COVID-19 since mid-December have been identified in persons not fully vaccinated. Additionally, Delta variant cases have nearly doubled in the past week—up from 11 cumulative cases on July 14 to 21 cases as of July 21, based on limited genomic sequencing efforts.

According to the latest CDC COVID-19 vaccination data, more than 81 percent of eligible residents 12 years and older in DuPage County 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.

Notably, among 12 to 17-year-olds in DuPage County, 57 percent have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, and only 49 percent are fully vaccinated. 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 in their ability to attend school, participate in sports, or spend time with their friends.

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“We’re increasingly learning that children and adolescents, even if without symptoms and with lower risk for severe illness, are still able to transmit COVID-19 infection to others, within and outside their household. Illinois Department of Public Health has reported several camp outbreaks this summer, especially where masking is not implemented, screening testing is not conducted, and the Delta variant is spreading. This results in preventable illness as well as disrupted lives in work, school, and time spent away from family and friends. We need our children to return to school with low to zero COVID-19 activity, not rising activity—we need to turn things around in the coming weeks for a safer, more enjoyable, and productive school environment for students, staff, and our community,” said Karen Ayala, Executive Director of DuPage County Health Department.

Yesterday, DCHD released a statement on COVID-19 Prevention Strategies in Schools. DCHD strongly recommends school districts begin the 2021-2022 school year with layered COVID-19 prevention strategies in place that are outlined in the updated [CDC guidance for K-12 schools](#), which were fully adopted by the Illinois Department of Public Health. However, health departments do not have the authority to require or enforce these strategies as school leaders and local school districts hold the ultimate authority to develop plans to return to school and ensure a safe school environment. To view the complete statement, visit www.dupagehealth.org/schoolpreventionstrategies.

As vaccination efforts continue, the DCHD Community Vaccination Clinic at 111 N. County Farm Road in Wheaton offers COVID-19 vaccines to individuals 12 years and older. Walk-ins are welcome Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Anyone under 18 years old must have a parent or legal guardian accompany them. Visitors are encouraged to save time by pre-registering. For more information, visit www.dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccineclinic.

To provide additional convenience for members of the community, the DCHD Care Van is providing free COVID-19 vaccinations in Glendale Heights, West Chicago, and Elmhurst 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.

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, or call (630) 682-7400 for assistance.

COVID-19 community transmission in DuPage County remains at a “moderate” level. As the County experiences a rise in case activity associated with the more dangerous Delta variant, 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. 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.

Additional COVID-19 vaccine information about local efforts, frequently asked questions, vaccination data, and more is available at 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.

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