

**Media Inquiries:**

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Executive Director

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.

August 25, 2021

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **COVID-19 Vaccines Continue to Provide Protection Even As Cases Increase in DuPage County**

**DuPage County**—As of today, 86 percent of eligible DuPage County residents have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, and 68 percent are fully vaccinated based on data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Despite the relatively high rate of vaccination, COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations continue to increase and are primarily occurring in those not fully vaccinated. DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) urges those who have not made the decision to get vaccinated against COVID-19 or who have postponed getting this life-saving vaccine to get vaccinated as soon as possible. The COVID-19 vaccines are extremely effective at preventing serious illness, hospitalization, and death – even from the Delta variant.

This week, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) fully approved the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for the prevention of COVID-19 disease in individuals 16 years of age and older. FDA’s full approval of the first COVID-19 vaccine is an important milestone that should reassure anyone who has concerns about getting vaccinated. The vaccine continues to be available under emergency use authorization (EUA) for those 12 through 15 years old and for a third dose in certain immunocompromised individuals. In addition to the rigorous testing and trials that went into EUA of the Pfizer vaccine, the FDA approval requires a rigorous and structured review process, and it means that a vaccine or drug has cleared every level of review.

“Now that the FDA has fully approved the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, I am hopeful that those who have delayed scheduling their COVID-19 vaccination feel more confident in the safety and efficacy of these vaccines and will get vaccinated,” said Karen Ayala, Executive Director of DuPage County Health Department. “With the continued rise of COVID-19 cases and hospitalization across the country, and here in DuPage County, it is more important than ever for all eligible people to get vaccinated to help protect themselves, their loved ones, and their community.”



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DCHD continues to monitor the situation regarding COVID-19 boosters for fully vaccinated people eight months after an individual's second dose. Although booster shots are expected to begin this fall, the FDA must first authorize a third dose of the Pfizer and Moderna mRNA vaccines and the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) must issue booster dose recommendations based on the evidence presented. DCHD is preparing for the likely approval of booster shots and will share updates and additional information in the coming weeks.

Currently, individuals with moderately to severely compromised immune systems are recommended for a third dose of COVID-19 vaccine. This includes people currently receiving treatment for cancer, people taking medications that weaken the immune systems, organ or stem cell transplant recipients, individuals with advanced or untreated HIV infection, and other conditions. A [full list of conditions](#) can be found on CDC's website. Individuals who believe they are eligible for a third vaccine dose should talk to their healthcare provider about their medical condition, whether getting an additional dose is appropriate for them, and the appropriate timing of vaccination. Third-dose vaccinations are available through local pharmacies or healthcare providers and can be given 28 days after receiving the second dose.

DuPage County remains at a "High" level of COVID-19 community transmission per CDC county-level data. Since last week, the 7-day rolling average of new cases reported in DuPage County decreased 12 percent from 179 new cases per day to 157 new cases per day. As of today, there are 106 individuals hospitalized, and 20 individuals receiving intensive healthcare services. Notably, over 97 percent of hospitalized and deceased COVID-19 cases since mid-December 2020 in DuPage County have been in persons not fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

As DuPage County residents return to work, school, sports, and activities, it is important to continue self-monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms. If someone is exposed to COVID-19 or begins to show symptoms, testing is a critical step to protect themselves and their family. DCHD encourages individuals, regardless of vaccination status, who have taken part in

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activities that put them at higher risk for COVID-19 including travel, attending large social gatherings, or being in crowded or poorly ventilated indoor settings to get tested. To find testing locations in DuPage County, visit [www.dupagehealth.org/covid19testing](http://www.dupagehealth.org/covid19testing). 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.

According to the latest [CDC COVID-19 vaccination data](#), 86 percent of eligible residents 12 years and older in DuPage County have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, and 68 percent are fully vaccinated. Of residents 65 years and older, 99.9 percent have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, and 84 percent are fully vaccinated. However, among 12 to 17-year-olds in DuPage County, 75 percent have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, and only 55 percent are fully vaccinated.

As vaccination efforts continue, there are numerous options for members of the community to get their COVID-19 vaccine in DuPage County. In addition to visiting [www.vaccines.gov](http://www.vaccines.gov) to find a nearby vaccine provider, the DCHD Community Vaccination Clinic in Wheaton offers COVID-19 vaccines Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For more information, visit [www.dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccineclinic](http://www.dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccineclinic). Another vaccination resource is the DCHD Care Van mobile clinic which provides free COVID-19 vaccinations directly to DuPage County communities. To learn more and view this week's schedule, visit [www.dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccine](http://www.dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccine).

Additionally, 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](http://dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccineregistration), or call (630) 682-7400 for assistance.

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).

