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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 28, 2021

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **DuPage County Experiencing Substantial COVID-19 Community Transmission**

### *Health Department Recommends Masking in Indoor Settings*

**DuPage County**— As of today, DuPage County’s COVID-19 community transmission is now at Substantial level per [Centers of Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#). The recent rise in cases and hospitalizations is likely attributed to the more contagious Delta variant which has now become the more predominant variant across the country. Still, vaccines continue to be the best form of protection against COVID-19, including the Delta variant and help prevent severe illness, hospitalization, and death.

The DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) strongly endorses the recently updated [CDC masking guidance](#) which recommends everyone, including fully vaccinated individuals, wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas with substantial and high transmission. This recommendation, includes employers, retailers, restaurants/bars, fitness/recreational centers, libraries, governmental entities, healthcare facilities, and other public venues.

Additionally, CDC is also recommending universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors in K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. As a result, DCHD released an updated statement today about [COVID-19 Prevention Strategies in Schools](#). School leaders and local school districts hold the ultimate authority to develop plans to return to school and ensure a safe school environment.

“The increase in activity we’re experiencing is concerning given the high efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccine and our relatively high rates of vaccination in DuPage County. We continue to urge our residents who are 12 years and older to get vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as possible to protect themselves and others against COVID-19 and the more dangerous Delta variant,” said Karen Ayala, Executive Director of DuPage County Health Department. “COVID-19 vaccine providers are now widely available and likely within minutes of your home or workplace. Please visit [www.vaccines.gov](http://www.vaccines.gov) to find a location near you.”

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It remains critical that individuals who are not fully vaccinated or are immunocompromised continue practicing [preventive measures](#) as they are at greater risk of contracting these 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 get tested after exposure. Close contacts should also self-quarantine 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](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html).

According to the latest [CDC COVID-19 vaccination data](#), more than 82 percent of eligible residents 12 years and older in DuPage County have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, and 66 percent are fully vaccinated. Of residents 65 years and older, 99 percent have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, and 82 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 [click here](#). 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.

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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