

# IMMUNIZATION COVID-19 UPDATE

ISSUE NO 15 | MAY 19, 2021



VACCINE DOSES  
ADMINISTERED IN  
LOUISIANA

2,864,990

CDC UPDATES  
THE MASK  
POLICY FOR  
THOSE FULLY  
VACCINATED

CDC updates that fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear a mask or physically distance, except when required. (Page 2)

PFIZER COVID-19  
VACCINE NOW  
AVAILABLE TO  
LOUISIANA  
RESIDENTS AGES  
12 AND ABOVE

Adolescents ages 12 and up can now receive the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. (Page 2-3)

## QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK:

**I am a Louisiana resident who was vaccinated for COVID-19 out-of-state. How can I get my vaccination status added to my LA Wallet app?**

In order for your COVID-19 vaccination record to show up in the LA Wallet application, your information must be entered into the Louisiana Immunization Network (LINKS). This needs to be done by a Louisiana health care provider. Visit any of your providers in Louisiana and bring your vaccination record card for your provider to enter in your vaccination information into LINKS. Any parish health unit can also assist with entering your vaccination information into LINKS as long as you bring your vaccination record card.

**I was vaccinated at a Veterans Affairs (VA) clinic and my vaccination record is not showing up in LA Wallet?**

At this time, the Office of Public Health (OPH) does not have a data sharing agreement with the VA. We are working on this but do not have a timeline for when this will happen. In the meantime, you can take your vaccination record card to any parish health unit and the staff there can access the Louisiana Immunization Network (LINKS) and enter your COVID-19 vaccination record into the system. Once this is completed, you should be able to sync LA Wallet to your vaccination record. *Please note: this may take one to two days.*



# WEEKLY COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATE

Here is an overview of major updates that occurred over the week.

## Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People

On Thursday, May 13, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated the mask guidance policy for fully vaccinated people.

Summary of recent changes:

- Fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear a mask or physically distance in any setting, except where required by federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance.
- Fully vaccinated people can refrain from testing following a known exposure unless they are residents and employees of a correctional or detention facility or a homeless shelter.



### ADDITIONAL KEY POINTS

Fully vaccinated people can:

- Resume domestic travel and refrain from testing before or after travel or self-quarantine after travel.
- Refrain from testing before leaving the US for international travel (unless required by destination) and refrain from self-quarantine after arriving back in the US.
- Refrain from testing following a known exposure, if asymptomatic, with some exceptions for specific settings.
- Refrain from quarantine following a known exposure if asymptomatic.
- Refrain from routine screening testing if feasible.

For now, fully-vaccinated people should continue to:

- Get tested if experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

- Follow CDC and health department travel requirements and recommendations.

For more information on CDC guidelines for fully vaccinated people, visit [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

## What's behind the CDC's Decision to Lift Mask Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People



While the change was announced suddenly, it came after gradually increasing data over months that indicated we should have high confidence in the ability of the vaccines to protect people from severe disease and death.

A recently published study in the [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report \(MMWR\)](#) confirmed that in real world use over the period from January to March of this year the two mRNA vaccines from Pfizer and Moderna were 94 percent effective at preventing symptomatic COVID-19 after both doses. *Please note: none of the published studies looking at the real world effectiveness of the vaccines have been able to address the Johnson and Johnson (J&J) COVID-19 vaccine because it hasn't been out as long.*

All of the most current data looking at the effectiveness of the vaccines is very supportive of the updated recommendation that fully vaccinated people, in ordinary settings, are safe to carry on without masks if they choose.

## Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine Now Available to Louisiana Residents Ages 12 and Above

Louisianans ages 12 and up can now receive the COVID-19 vaccine, following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) action late Wednesday (5/12/21) formally recommending the use of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for this age group. Prior to this announcement, the Pfizer vaccine was recommended and authorized for people no younger than 16 years of age.

The Food & Drug Administration (FDA) authorized the emergency use of the Pfizer vaccine for this age group earlier this week. On Wednesday, May 12, 2021, the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) overwhelmingly recommended, and the CDC approved, this use of the vaccine, based on clinical trial data that found it to be safe and effective.

State Health Officer Dr. Joseph Kanter said the vaccine has now passed the same safety benchmarks for this younger age group as it did for those ages 16 and older. On Thursday, May 13, 2021, the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) alerted vaccine providers that they can begin administering the Pfizer vaccine to people ages 12 and up. This updated guidance goes into effect immediately.

“We have the utmost confidence in the FDA and CDC’s rigorous safety and efficacy review and, after looking at the data ourselves, are excited to now expand eligibility for more young people in Louisiana,” said Dr. Kanter, Louisiana State Health Officer. “Today is a good day, and it means more families have the ability to protect their children and their families and enjoy summer with confidence.”

Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards has joined state and national health officials and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) in urging young people, their parents, and all adults to get the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as it is available to them.

There are currently about 1,500 locations in Louisiana that offer the COVID-19 vaccine. To get your questions answered, find a provider or event near you, or get your appointment scheduled, call our COVID Vaccine Hotline at 855-453-0774.

For a person younger than age 18, parental/caregiver consent is needed to get the shot. To make it easy, the Louisiana Department of Health developed a consent form in English, Spanish, Japanese, and Vietnamese that can be found on its website at: [covidvaccine.la.gov](https://covidvaccine.la.gov).

The guidance issued by the CDC states the vaccines are safe and effective for people between the ages of 12 and 16. In clinical trials, the Pfizer vaccine has demonstrated 100 percent effectiveness in children as young as 12 years old with minimal side effects.

The reviews by the FDA and the CDC concluded that people ages 12 and above will not have side effects that are different from people who have already been vaccinated. These side effects are mild and include moderate pain or swelling in the arm where the shot was given, fever, chills, tiredness and/or headaches. These are normal side effects that usually go away within a couple of days.

**For more information on the age expansion for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, visit [ldh.la.gov](https://ldh.la.gov).**

## LOUISIANA COVID-19 VACCINE DEMOGRAPHICS

### SERIES COMPLETED BY RACE:

- **White:** 60.56%
- **Black:** 27.98%
- **American Indian:** 0.29%
- **Asian:** 2.73%
- **Native Hawaiian:** 0.20%
- **Unknown:** 1.35%
- **Other:** 6.89%

### SERIES COMPLETED BY AGE:

- **5-17:** 0.70%
- **18-29:** 9.0%
- **30-39:** 10.9%
- **40-49:** 12.43%
- **50-59:** 17.68%
- **60-69:** 23.62%
- **70+:** 25.66%

### SERIES COMPLETED BY GENDER:

- **Female:** 56.72%
- **Male:** 43%
- **Unknown:** 0.29%

All breakdowns shown here are for Louisiana residents only. Race data completeness is expected to improve as we continue our outreach with vaccine providers.

## Good Reads

**New honor system on masks: ‘Am I to trust these people?’** – This article talks about how the new coronavirus mask guidelines from the CDC have left Americans wondering whether they can trust one another.

Read more at [nytimes.com](https://nytimes.com).

**Changed by pandemic, many workers won’t return to old jobs** – This article talks about how many Americans are rethinking their careers with life starting to return to pre-pandemic times.

Read more at [apnews.com](https://apnews.com).



























**Anti-vaccine debate blows up in House committee as Louisiana struggles with COVID immunizations** – This article talks about the state House Chamber is discussions on the efficacy and safety of COVID-19 vaccines in Louisiana.

Read more at [theadvocate.com](https://theadvocate.com).



# Choosing Safer Activities

Accessible link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/daily-life-coping/participate-in-activities.html>

	Unvaccinated People	Examples of Activities	Fully Vaccinated People
		<b>Outdoor</b>	
Safest		Walk, run, wheelchair roll, or bike outdoors with members of your household	
		Attend a small, outdoor gathering with fully vaccinated family and friends	
		Attend a small, outdoor gathering with fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people	
Less Safe		Dine at an outdoor restaurant with friends from multiple households	
Least Safe		Attend a crowded, outdoor event, like a live performance, parade, or sports event	
		<b>Indoor</b>	
Less Safe		Visit a barber or hair salon	
		Go to an uncrowded, indoor shopping center or museum	
		Attend a small, indoor gathering of fully vaccinated and unvaccinated people from multiple households	
Least Safe		Go to an indoor movie theater	
		Attend a full-capacity worship service	
		Sing in an indoor chorus	
		Eat at an indoor restaurant or bar	
		Participate in an indoor, high intensity exercise class	

## Get a COVID-19 vaccine



**Prevention measures not needed**



**Take prevention measures**

Wear a mask, stay 6 feet apart, and wash your hands.

- Safety levels assume the recommended prevention measures are followed, both by the individual and the venue (if applicable).
- CDC cannot provide the specific risk level for every activity in every community. It is important to consider your own personal situation and the risk to you, your family, and your community before venturing out.



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)