

111 N. County Farm Rd., Wheaton, IL 60187

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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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.

DCHD Statement on Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Booster Vaccination

DuPage County—On September 24, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky, endorsed the CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' (ACIP) recommendation for a booster dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine in certain populations and also recommended a booster dose for those in high risk occupational and institutional settings. The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) authorization and CDC's guidance for use are important steps forward to help end the pandemic.

CDC recommends:

- people 65 years and older and residents in long-term care settings **should** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series,
- people aged 50–64 years with underlying medical conditions **should** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series,
- people aged 18–49 years with underlying medical conditions **may** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series, based on their individual benefits and risks, and
- people aged 18–64 years who are at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational or institutional setting **may** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series, based on their individual benefits and risks.

DuPage County has developed a robust network of vaccination sites throughout the county. Individuals who are eligible for the booster dose can visit www.vaccines.gov and enter your zip code to find a vaccine provider near you. This vaccine tool allows individuals to search by location, vaccine brand/manufacturer, and appointment availability. You may also talk to your healthcare provider about how to get the COVID-19 booster.

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DuPage County Health Department Executive Director Karen Ayala advises, “It is important to understand that fully vaccinated individuals still retain high levels of protection against the most serious outcomes related to COVID-19, and that there is NOT an urgency to receive the booster dose. Vaccine supply of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is robust currently and with over 200 vaccine providers in DuPage County alone, individuals will not experience the challenges for this dose that were present at the outset of vaccination efforts earlier this year.”

As the DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) prepares for the reopening of its mass vaccination clinic on October 13, 2021 at the DuPage County Fairgrounds location, DCHD will also begin offering a limited number of COVID-19 vaccine boosters at 111 N. County Farm Road in Wheaton and 1111 E. Jackson Street in Lombard to eligible residents by appointment only beginning on October 1st.

For any booster vaccine doses offered by DCHD, opportunities are available by appointment only and advance registration is required. Individuals who are currently eligible for a booster shot and previously registered on the Health Department’s vaccine site will receive an email notification with instructions on booking an appointment. Individuals not yet registered who are seeking a booster dose should register for appointment notifications at www.dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccine or call (630) 682-7400 if assistance is needed with registration (e.g., no internet or computer access, need language assistance, or have questions).

Many of the people who are now eligible to receive a booster shot received their initial vaccine early in the vaccination program and will benefit from additional protection. However, the Health Department continues to prioritize vaccination efforts on reaching the unvaccinated, who are at greatest risk of severe illness, hospitalization, and death due to COVID-19 infection. Currently, DCHD estimates there are approximately 90,000 DuPage County residents who have not yet received any vaccination to protect them from COVID-19, in spite of being in the eligible population.

All three COVID-19 vaccines available in the U.S. continue to offer protection against COVID-19 and are safe and highly effective at preventing severe illness, hospitalization, and death. With the Delta variant’s dominance as the circulating strain and cases of COVID-19 increasing significantly locally and nationally, a booster shot will help strengthen protection against severe disease in those populations who are at high-risk for exposure to COVID-19 or the complications from severe disease. Importantly, DCHD continues to urge residents who are 12 years and older to get vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as possible to protect themselves and those around them against COVID-19. More information is available at www.dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccine.