

COVID-19 BRIEFING

Updates on COVID-19 in Idaho



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH & WELFARE

March 12, 2021

Welcome to the Department of Health and Welfare's bi-weekly briefing on the department's latest news, communications activities, and resources for the COVID-19 pandemic. New in this edition of the briefing are reflections on the one-year anniversary of the pandemic, updates to vaccine priority groups, the statewide pre-registration tool for vaccine appointments, and more. New sections are marked "NEW" and all other sections are up-to-date as of the time of publishing.

NEW
INFORMATION



COVID-19 PANDEMIC ANNIVERSARY

Saturday, March 13, marks the one-year anniversary of Idaho's first confirmed case of COVID-19. More than 1,900 Idahoans have died from this aggressive disease, and at least 174,600 Idahoans have been infected.

See [Gov. Brad Little's message](#) about one year of Idaho's pandemic fight.

DHW Director Dave Jeppesen shared his thoughts about the one-year anniversary of the pandemic in a [Facebook Live video](#) and in a [blog post](#).

NEW
INFORMATION

UPCOMING VACCINE PRIORITY GROUPS

Vaccinations are now available for:

- Ages 65 and Older
- Healthcare workers
- Long-term care facility staff and residents
- First responders
- K-12 teachers and school staff
- Frontline essential workers

VACCINE SCHEDULE

MARCH

Medical conditions are defined as "are at increased risk" and "might be at increased risk" per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Visit the CDC to see a [full list of conditions](#) that qualify as a medical condition. In addition, disabilities are also included as a medical condition.

- Age 55-64 with at least one medical condition - Open by March 15th
- Age 55-64 general population - Open March 22nd
- Age 45-54 with at least one medical condition - Open March 29th
- Age 45-54 general population - Open April 5th

** Local Public Health Districts can open bands earlier if supply/demand allows

APRIL

Ages 16-44 are currently being considered by the COVID-10 Vaccine Advisory Committee for recommendations to the Governor.

See a [detailed list of priority groups](#).

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IDAHO COVID-19 VACCINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CVAC)

At its most recent meeting on March 5, CVAC sent recommendations for prioritizing Group 3 plus one clarification on Group 2 to Gov. Little, who has since adopted the recommendations.

See a [press release](#) for more information on CVAC's recommendations. CVAC is scheduled to meet next on March 12.



CDC GUIDANCE FOR FULLY VACCINATED PEOPLE

This week, CDC published new guidelines: fully vaccinated people can have small gatherings indoors with other fully vaccinated people without wearing a mask, but should continue wearing masks in public. Visit [CDC's website](#) to see what else has changed.



IDAHO'S COVID-19 VACCINE PRE-REGISTRATION SYSTEM

On March 5, Idaho launched a new COVID-19 vaccine appointment pre-registration solution to help alleviate the frustration of many Idahoans in trying to make an appointment to get the vaccine.

The pre-registration system allows Idahoans to add their names to one waiting list regardless of when they are eligible to get the vaccine. They will be contacted by an enrolled COVID-19 vaccine provider when it is their turn and when the provider has appointments and vaccine available.

As of March 12, 62,246 Idahoans have registered in the system, and 5,234 eligible Idahoans have been selected by a vaccine provider for an appointment through the system.

See the [press release](#) for more information.

FEDERAL RETAIL PHARMACY PROGRAM FOR COVID-19 VACCINATION

This program sends over 10,000 first doses of COVID-19 vaccine to certain pharmacy locations in Idaho each week in addition to the state's regular allocation. As of this week, the program has sent 50,830 first doses to Idaho.

During the first week of March, Walgreens was activated to participate in the program. Also participating in the program are Walmart, Albertsons and Cardinal Health.



COVID-19 STATISTICS



Idaho is now receiving about 47,000 doses of Moderna and Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine doses each week, not including the new Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Idaho received 13,300 doses of Johnson & Johnson vaccine March 4, but received zero doses of that vaccine this week. Next week, Idaho expects to receive 1,900 doses of Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

As of March 11, 304,211 people have received vaccine and 181,267 people are fully vaccinated.

As of March 11, there have been 174,610 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and a total of 1,906 COVID-19-related deaths in Idaho.

Over the past week, the counties seeing the highest COVID-19 infection rates in Idaho include Bonneville, Madison, and Jefferson. Those counties have been seeing 7-day moving average incident rates of 59.8, 42.2, and 41.1 respectively.

COVID-19 statistics can be found on the [COVID-19 Case, Laboratory, and Hospital Data Dashboard](#). Case data is now updated Monday through Saturday by 5 p.m., hospitalization data is updated Monday, Wednesday, and Friday by 5 p.m. and percent positivity testing data is updated by 5 p.m. MT on Thursdays.

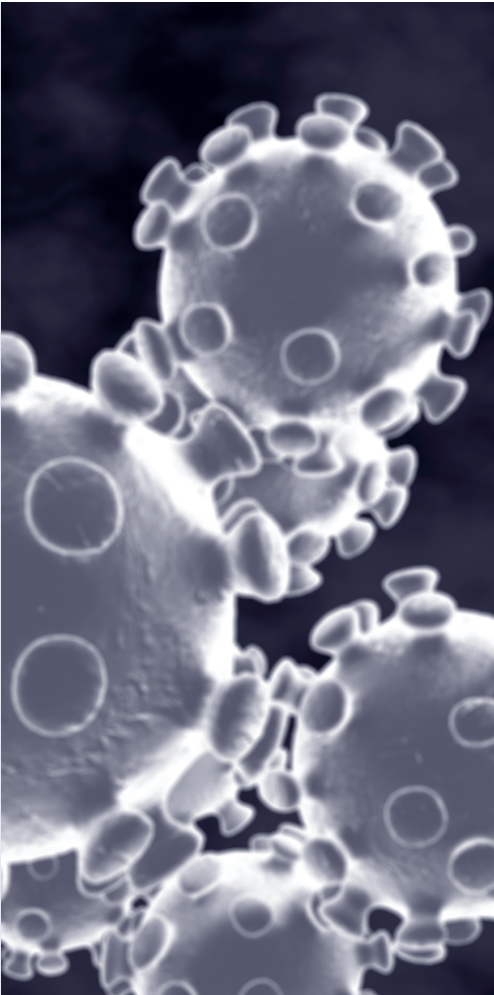
Also on the coronavirus website is the [COVID-19 Vaccine Data Dashboard](#). It includes COVID-19 vaccinations by county and public health district, cumulative doses administered, trend data and more. Additional data may be added in the future. The dashboard updates Monday through Saturday at 5 p.m. (not including holidays).

DHW SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

Recent social media campaigns have promoted the new, statewide pre-registration system for vaccine appointments; highlighted new statistics, including the number of registrants in the system as well as frequently asked questions about it; and communicated the latest updates on vaccine priority groups, among other messages.

**IDAHO'S COVID-19
VACCINE
PRE-REGISTRATION
SYSTEM**

[HTTPS://COVIDVACCINE.IDAHO.GOV](https://COVIDVACCINE.IDAHO.GOV)



BUSTING COVID-19 MYTHS

MYTH: I'm allergic to eggs so I shouldn't get the COVID-19 vaccine.

FACT: Eggs were not used in the development or production of the Pfizer/BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. However, those with severe allergic reactions to eggs or any other substance (i.e., anaphylaxis) are encouraged to remain after vaccination for 30 minutes for observation.

MYTH: COVID-19 vaccines do not protect against COVID-19 variants.

FACT: Early research suggests that the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines can provide protection against the COVID-19 variants first identified in the U.K. and South Africa. Vaccine manufacturers are also looking into creating booster shots to improve protection against variants. In clinical trials, the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine provided protection against severe disease with the COVID-19 virus caused by variants identified in South Africa and Brazil.

COVID-19 VACCINE INFORMATION ONLINE

The [COVID-19 vaccination information web page](#) includes information on vaccine priority groups, when and where to get vaccinated, and what to expect at a vaccine appointment.

The [COVID-19 vaccine section](#) on the coronavirus website is updated daily. The page includes a comprehensive COVID-19 FAQ that is updated weekly, information on how to volunteer during the pandemic, recordings of DHW's media briefings, and a schedule of meeting dates for the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) as well as Idaho's COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Committee (CVAC), among other resources.

There is also a link available with [resources for COVID-19 vaccine providers](#).

GOVERNOR'S ACTIONS

Idaho remains in Stage 3 of the Idaho Rebounds Plan. Under the Stage 3 Stay Healthy Guidelines, gatherings should be limited to 50 or fewer people, though the rule doesn't apply to political and religious expression. See the [press release](#) for more information about the move.

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SCHOOLS

The summary of COVID-19 cases associated with schools in Idaho at the [coronavirus website](#) is published on Mondays under the [“Schools” tab](#).

LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES

The summary of COVID-19 cases associated with long-term care facilities in Idaho at the [coronavirus website](#) is published on Fridays under the [“Long-Term Care” tab](#).

DHW WEEKLY MEDIA BRIEFINGS

DHW has hosted weekly media briefings about COVID-19 vaccine every Tuesday at 2:30 p.m. since Jan. 5. The remote events have included updates from Gov. Little and DHW officials, followed by a question-and-answer session with members of the media.

For more information about the briefings see a [press release](#). [Recordings](#) of past media briefings are posted on the coronavirus website.

COMMUNICATIONS FORUM

DHW’s Office of Communications, in partnership with the Gov. Little’s communications director, created a forum for communications professionals in state agencies, health districts, healthcare agencies and facilities, and stakeholders to meet every other Monday to discuss COVID-19-related communications efforts and strategies. The next meeting is on March 15. If you are a communications professional and would like to join the call, send an email to communications@dhw.idaho.gov.