

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LINK TO MEDIA RELEASE

State Urges Employers to Adopt Vaccine Verification, Issues New Guidance

HILLSBOROUGH, N.C. July 30, 2021 — With COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations accelerating at an alarming rate, North Carolina will begin requiring vaccine verification for state employees and urges other government agencies and private employers to do the same.

The changes announced Thursday, July 29, come as the highly contagious and potentially dangerous Delta variant has spread across the state mostly in the unvaccinated. The changes include additional guidance for unvaccinated people and align with new guidance on masks from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“Until more people get the vaccine, we will continue living with the very real threat of serious disease, and we will continue to see more dangerous and contagious variants like Delta,” Gov. Roy Cooper said.

He and Secretary Mandy Cohen of the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services urged pushing unvaccinated family and friends to get their shots.

Updated guidance

Updated guidance from the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services reminds unvaccinated people:

- Continue practicing the three Ws — wear a mask in all indoor public settings, wait 6 feet apart in all public settings, and wash hands often.
- Do not gather with other unvaccinated people who do not live with you — or stay outside and keep 6 feet of distance.
- Do not travel.

Updated guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention this week recommends that fully vaccinated people wear masks indoors in areas where the COVID-19 virus has substantial or high community transmission. According to the CDC’s [COVID Data Tracker](#), Orange County currently has moderate community transmission. Counties surrounding Orange County currently have substantial or high community transmission.

The state also recommends — in accordance with the updated CDC guidance — that all K-12 public and non-public schools require face coverings to be worn by students, staff and visitors regardless of their vaccination status. The N.C. Department of Health and Human Services is updating its guidance for schools to align with this recommendation.

Executive Order 224

The governor's latest [executive order](#) took effect at 5 p.m. July 29 and will remain in effect through 5 p.m. Aug. 31. Under the order:

- Effective Aug. 2, unvaccinated cabinet agency employees must wear face coverings in any indoor area of a state government office, building, or facility that is controlled by an agency which is part of the governor's office or is headed by a member of the governor's cabinet.
- Effective Sept. 1, cabinet agency employees who are not vaccinated will have to undergo weekly COVID-19 testing.

Under the order, private businesses and organizations are strongly encouraged to follow, at minimum, the guidance from the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services to reduce transmission of COVID-19, including the Delta variant. The recommendations are available at [covid19.ncdhhs.gov/guidance](https://www.covid19.ncdhhs.gov/guidance). They include:

- Requiring workers to verify that they are fully vaccinated.
- Requiring unvaccinated workers to wear face coverings and be tested weekly.
- Recommending face coverings for fully vaccinated workers and guests indoors when other people are present.

"There is only one way out of this pandemic, and that is vaccination," the state secretary said. "Our trends are accelerating at an alarmingly fast rate, and the highest rates of viral spread are happening in areas with low vaccination rates and among those who are not fully vaccinated.

"If you are already vaccinated, I call on you to urge your unvaccinated family and friends to get their shot now. It is not an understatement to say that you will save lives by doing so."

Local emergency declaration extended

With hospitalizations increasing and the Delta variant spreading, Orange County has extended indefinitely its state of emergency declaration related to COVID-19. The extension became effective at 5 p.m. July 23.

After weeks at some of the lowest levels of COVID-19 since last year, the number of COVID-19 cases in Orange County have begun to rise again. Orange County's percent positive rate of COVID tests was at 0.4% the week of June 6-12 but has increased since. It is currently 2.4% for the week of July 18-24. Most of the new cases are among unvaccinated individuals and are caused by the rapidly spreading Delta variant.

Walk-in and pop-up vaccination clinics

Getting a free, effective and safe COVID-19 vaccine is easy, with multiple providers in the area and walk-in and pop-up clinics throughout the county. The Pfizer vaccine has been approved for ages 12 and up. The Moderna and Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccines are approved for ages 18 and older. Learn more about the vaccines at [covid19.ncdhhs.gov/vaccines](https://www.covid19.ncdhhs.gov/vaccines).

The Orange County Health Department offers these walk-in vaccine clinics:

- Chapel Hill — 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday at the Southern Human Services Center, 2501 Homestead Road. If you'd like to schedule an appointment, call 919-913-8088. Moderna, Pfizer, and Johnson & Johnson are available at this location, and the clinic is closed on holidays.
- Hillsborough — 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday-Saturday on the second floor of the Whitted Human Services Center, 300 W. Tryon St. If you'd like to schedule an appointment, call 877-505-6723. For questions, call 919-913-8088. Moderna and Pfizer vaccines are available at this location, and the clinic will be closed Aug. 9, 12 and 13.

The Orange County Health Department also offers pop-up vaccine clinics to all community members ages 12 and older. Three upcoming clinics will be offered in Hillsborough. Community members are encouraged to register by calling 919-913-8088 or by visiting www.myspot.nc.gov. Walk-ins also are welcome.

- Last Fridays — 6 to 9 p.m. July 30 at the Historic Orange County Courthouse, 104 E. King St. in Hillsborough.
- National Night Out at Gateway Apartments — 6 to 8:30 p.m. Aug. 3 at the apartment complex, 400 Lakeside Drive in Hillsborough. First-dose recipients will also receive \$25 gift cards.
- Passmore Center at the Orange County Sportsplex — 4 to 7 p.m. Aug. 4 at the senior center, 103 Meadowlands Drive in Hillsborough.

Flyers for the pop-up clinics are available below. For up-to-date information on clinics, visit www.orangecountync.gov/getyourshot.

More information

To date, North Carolina has administered nearly 9.8 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, with 57% of the adult population fully vaccinated. 64% of Orange County community members are fully vaccinated.

- Learn more about the state's vaccine distribution at myspot.nc.gov (English) or vacunate.nc.gov (Spanish).
- Details on the Your Shot at \$1 Million Summer Cash Drawing can be found at covid19.ncdhhs.gov/summervaxcash.
- Use the state's online tool [Find a Vaccine Location](#) to find a nearby vaccination site.
- Call the state's COVID-19 vaccine hotline at 888-675-4567.

Related documents

- Executive order 224: <https://files.nc.gov/governor/documents/files/EO224-COVID-19-Measures.pdf>

- Frequently asked questions about Executive Order 224:
<https://files.nc.gov/governor/documents/files/Executive-Order-224-FAQ.pdf>
- Last Fridays vaccine clinic flyer:
<https://www.orangecountync.gov/DocumentCenter/View/16362/Last-Fridays-PopUp-Clinic---73021>
- National Night Out vaccine clinic flyer:
<https://www.orangecountync.gov/DocumentCenter/View/16667/National-Night-Out-PopUp-Clinic---8321-updated>
- Passmore Center vaccine clinic flyer:
<https://www.orangecountync.gov/DocumentCenter/View/16668/Passmore-Center-PopUp-Clinic---8421>

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