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# Newsroom

Welcome to the Office of Governor Walz and Lt. Governor Flanagan Newsroom. Here you will find our latest press releases, statements, and other information.

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## Governor Walz Announces Vaccination Requirements for State Agency Employees

State agency employees will be required to show proof of vaccination or participate in regular testing before returning to the workplace

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[ST. PAUL, MN] – In order to protect Minnesota workers and families from COVID-19 and prevent further spread of the virus and its highly contagious variants, Governor Tim Walz announced today that state agency employees will be required to show proof of vaccination or participate in regular testing before returning to the workplace.

State agency employees working in person will be required to show proof of vaccination and attest to their vaccination status by Wednesday, September 8. Employees who are not vaccinated will be required to receive a negative COVID-19 test at least once a week in order to work on-site at all public workplaces around the state.

**“Vaccination is the best way to keep employees and the people we serve safe and ensure the Delta variant does not derail our economic recovery,”** said Governor Walz. **“The state is leading by example and working to get our public employees vaccinated to protect themselves, their coworkers, and their communities. With this action, we’re joining businesses and colleges across the state who have taken this important step, and I urge other employers to do the same.”**

**“With the Delta variant rising across the state, Minnesotans deserve to feel confident in their safety and security in the workplace,”** said Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan. **“Getting vaccinated is the best way to keep our workers safe, and I encourage all state agency employees to get their shot as soon as possible. It’s how we take care of each other as Minnesotans.”**

**“Vaccination is the best tool we have available to minimize the impacts of COVID-19 and protect our workers, our organizations and our communities,”** said Minnesota Department of Health Commissioner Jan Malcolm. **“We encourage all Minnesotans to get vaccinated as soon as they are eligible.”**

The State of Minnesota joins a growing list of private sector employers and a bipartisan group of governors in requiring vaccination for in-person work.

In Minnesota, major employers including Mayo Clinic, Allina Health, M Health Fairview, and Sanford Health are requiring employees to be vaccinated. Nearly a dozen of Minnesota’s colleges and universities are requiring their employees and students to receive the vaccine before returning to campus.

The Biden Administration has instituted a vaccination and testing protocol for 4 million federal workers and on-site contractors, and mandated vaccinations for Defense Department service members and Veterans Affairs

healthcare personnel. At least seven states have instituted vaccination requirements for public employees. Major national companies like Tyson Foods, Microsoft, United Airlines, and Disney will require employees to submit proof of vaccination before returning to work, and according to polling from American Express, half of America's small businesses are certain or likely to require their on-site employees to be fully vaccinated.

Minnesota's vaccination or weekly testing requirement for state agency employees comes as the state sees a steady increase in COVID-19 cases. New cases are up 574% per week from one month ago, nearly entirely driven by the highly-contagious Delta variant. The variant makes up 90% of cases sequenced in Minnesota.

The overwhelming majority of these cases are among unvaccinated Minnesotans. Less than 0.2% of fully vaccinated Minnesotans have tested positive for COVID-19. Peer-reviewed studies show all three vaccines currently authorized for use in the United states are highly effective at preventing serious illness or death from COVID-19.

Minnesota is a national leader in vaccinations: According to the CDC, 72.8% of adults have at least one dose and the state leads the Midwest with 54.3% of our whole population having completed their vaccine series.

Minnesota's vaccination rate is increasing: providers more than doubled the number of first doses administered last week compared their lowest point in July, and total doses administered weekly are up 54% from that point. Minnesotans who get their first dose of vaccine through August 15 are eligible to receive a \$100 Visa gift card at [mn.gov/covid19/100](https://mn.gov/covid19/100).

### **How Minnesotans can get their Free Shot:**

- Find an appointment through the Vaccine Connector: [VaccineConnector.mn.gov](https://vaccineconnector.mn.gov)
  - Minnesota Department of Health COVID-19 Public Hotline
    - 1-833-431-2053
    - Mon-Fri, 9 a.m. – 7 p.m. & Sat, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
- Use the state's Vaccine Locator Map to find a vaccine provider near you: <https://mn.gov/covid19/vaccine/find-vaccine/locations/index.jsp> .
- Check for vaccine appointments using the Vaccine Finder on <https://www.vaccines.gov/> You can search for appointments by vaccine type (e.g., Pfizer).
- Contact your primary health care provider or a local pharmacy.
- Employers may also reach out with information about vaccination opportunities.

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