

Frequently Asked Questions Jefferson County Public Health Orders 21-005 January 19, 2022

About Public Health Order 21-005

1. What is required by Public Health Order 21-005?

[Public Health Order 21-005](#) requires that all Local Government Workers get tested for COVID-19 weekly (every 7 days) in order to report to work in person. County and municipal government workers can opt out of the testing requirement by submitting proof of full vaccination to their employer (unless their employer chooses to require routine testing for everyone).

2. When does Public Health Order 21-005 go into effect?

[Public Health Order 21-005](#) went into effect on November 1, 2021. County and municipal government workers needed to submit their first negative test (or proof of full vaccination to opt out of the testing requirement) by November 1, 2021.

NOTE: Public Health Order 21-005 was amended January 19, to reflect new guidance from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and [Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment \(CDPHE\)](#), with respect to retesting after a confirmed positive COVID-19 test as well as shortened isolation and quarantine length.

3. Who does Public Health Order 21-005 apply to?

[Public Health Order 21-005](#) applies to all Local Government Workers. Local Government means Jefferson County and any municipality within Jefferson County. Local Government does not include school districts or special districts. A Local Government Worker is any full-time, part-time, temporary, or limited employee, and shall also include any contractors or volunteers who perform any work functions on behalf of local government or any of its appointed or elected officials. Workers who engage in remote work 100% of the time are not subject to the testing requirements of Public Health Order 21-005.

4. How long will Public Health Order 21-005 stay in effect?

[Public Health Order 21-005](#) shall be in effect during all periods of time in which the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) categorizes the county's seven-day COVID-19 metrics result in Level of Community Transmission as High or Substantial. [View the CDC's COVID-19 Integrated County View website](#), which shows the seven-day metrics of key data for monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States.

5. I am not vaccinated. Do I have to get tested weekly even if I recently had COVID-19 (within 90 days)?

Yes, for purposes of the Public Health Order, unvaccinated employees must submit to weekly testing regardless of a recent positive COVID-19 test. [Public Health Order 21-005](#) only permits Local Government Workers to opt out of the testing requirement if they submit proof of full vaccination to their employer.

If you test positive for COVID-19, regardless of your vaccination status, you **MUST** isolate for 5 full days from either the date of symptom onset OR the date of the test if you had no symptoms at all. You can return to work after your isolation period is complete, but you must resume weekly testing.

- If you continue to test positive within 90 days from the original positive COVID-19 test date, you may continue to work in person so long as they are symptom-free.
- If you test positive more than 90 days after the original positive COVID-19 test date, you must isolate and be treated as a new positive COVID-19 case.
- If you become symptomatic within 90 days from the original positive COVID-19 test date, you should not report to work in person and should get tested for COVID-19.

Scientists are still learning more about how long you might be immune after recovering from COVID-19. Additionally, individual immune responses may be different for different people. Early evidence suggests natural immunity from COVID-19 may not last very long in some people, and cases of reinfection have been reported.

6. I volunteer with a local government organization, but I am not employed by them. Do I have to follow Public Health Order 21-005?

Yes, the Order applies to volunteers who perform any work functions on behalf of a county and municipal government organization.

7. I am a contractor with a local government organization, but I am not employed by them. Do I have to follow Public Health Order 21-005?

Yes, the Order applies to contractors who perform any work functions on behalf of a county and municipal government organization.

8. Are visitors to Jefferson County facilities required to show a negative test or be fully vaccinated?

No.

9. Are there exemptions to Public Health Order 21-005?

Those who are exempt from the weekly testing requirement include:

- A Local Government employer requires weekly testing regardless of vaccination status, unless Workers who have opted out of the weekly testing requirement by submitting proof of full vaccination to their employer.
- Local Government Workers who engage in remote work 100% of the time.

However, if and when a Worker plans to return in-person to the worksite, they must first submit a negative COVID-19 test or proof of full vaccination.

- Employees requesting a reasonable accommodation based on a medical or religious exemption should follow their employer's guidance on how to do so.

10. What types of COVID-19 tests are permitted to meet the weekly testing requirements in Public Health Order 21-005?

The following means of testing are permitted:

- Molecular tests (PCR), a molecular amplification test to detect viral genetic material from the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Antigen tests, a rapid test to detect fragments of proteins found on or within the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Tests must have the ability to be proctored.

11. Public Health Order 21-005 requires that local government employers use COVID-19 tests that can be proctored. What does "proctored" mean, and how can I tell if a specific test has the ability to be proctored?

Tests must have the ability to be proctored. However, there is no requirement for tests to be proctored.

A test is proctored when a trained professional observes the sample and testing so that the integrity of the test can be maintained. In this case, they are trained in an individual brand of a COVID-19 test. To ensure a third-party test supports proctoring (either in-person or virtually), check the test's product information. If not included, contact either support or the manufacturer, as this will vary between test types. All tests at [JCPH community vaccination sites](#) are proctored. [Click here](#) to see the full list of tests that have received emergency use authorization (EUA) from the FDA.

12. Where can I get tested?

Please [see this list for FREE locations](#) where you can get a PCR test in Jeffco. Employers may also specify the testing option(s) available to workers within its organization. Additional testing guidance is available on JCPH's website at www.jeffco.us/testing.

13. How should Local Government Workers submit COVID-19 tests results to their employer?

Local government employers can specify how their employers should submit test results.

14. Who pays for COVID-19 testing?

There are many [free testing options](#) across Jefferson County. Employers may also specify the testing option(s) available to workers within its organization, and costs for those options would be the responsibility of the employer.

15. How should I show proof that I am fully vaccinated to my employer?

Local government employers can specify how their employers should submit proof of full vaccination.

16. What does being fully vaccinated mean?

An individual is considered fully vaccinated two calendar weeks after they have received all required doses of the prescribed COVID-19 vaccine. Unless an individual is fully vaccinated, they are considered unvaccinated.

17. What counts as proof of vaccination?

Your COVID-19 vaccination card is your proof of vaccination. If you lost your card, please see the next question for guidance on how to obtain proof of vaccination through acceptable sources.

18. What if I lost my COVID-19 vaccination card?

- If you got the COVID-19 vaccine in Colorado, you can get your immunization record through the Colorado Immunization Information System (CIIS) [Public Portal](#). If you have difficulty finding your record, [please review this CDPHE guidance document](#).
- Alternatively, if you got the COVID-19 vaccine in Colorado, you can find a digital version of your COVID-19 immunization card through [myVaccine record on the myColorado mobile app](#).
- If you got your COVID-19 vaccination(s) outside of Colorado, please contact your vaccination provider or the immunization information system of the state in which you received your COVID-19 to request a copy of your records.

19. How can I get vaccinated for COVID-19?

- There are many easy and convenient ways to get a FREE COVID-19 vaccine:
 - Visit a JCPH COVID-19 vaccination clinic near you. Walk-ups are welcome. [Find a location near you](#).
 - Go to a local vaccine provider. [Visit CDPHE's website for a complete listing](#) of healthcare partners offering COVID-19 vaccines.
 - Get vaccinated at a retail pharmacy location like Walgreens, CVS, King Soopers, Walmart or Sam's Club. Check in with your nearest location to be sure they have supply and appointments available.
 - Go to a community vaccination site run by CDPHE. [See the CDPHE website for the most recent list of locations](#).
 - Talk to your healthcare provider about other options.

20. Are COVID-19 vaccines safe? How do we know?

- The FDA requires that vaccines undergo a rigorous scientific process, including three phases of clinical trials, before they authorize or approve the vaccine. The COVID-19 vaccines are subject to the same safety standards as

other vaccine trials. To date, the independent Data and Safety Monitoring Board overseeing Phase Three trials of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines has not identified or reported any serious safety concerns. All Phase Three studies have Data Safety and Monitoring Boards. The boards are made up of independent scientists hired by the company to look at the safety data and check at regular intervals whether the company should cancel or continue with the study. Additionally, two independent advisory committees will review a vaccine's safety data before it is made available to the public. These committees are the Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC), which advises the FDA, and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), which advises the CDC. [Learn more about the vaccine safety and development process.](#)

21. Do COVID-19 vaccines protect against the more transmissible Omicron variant?

- Yes. Getting vaccinated (and getting your third dose when you're due for one) is the best way to protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community from COVID-19, including the omicron variant.
- Even with limited data, there is strong evidence that people who have gotten their third dose have much better protection than those who have received only two doses. Those who get a dose of Pfizer or Moderna after the Johnson & Johnson vaccine also showed increased immunity in laboratory studies. Getting a third dose (or a second dose after J&J) is one of the most important things you can do to protect yourself against omicron.
- While early evidence does show that vaccines are likely less effective against omicron, they still reduce your chance of getting seriously sick or needing to be hospitalized due to COVID-19.
- Getting vaccinated also protects others around you. Current data suggests that vaccination reduces the spread of infection, leading to fewer opportunities for new variants to develop and spread.

22. If I have already had COVID-19, do I still need to be vaccinated?

- Yes. You should get a vaccine even if you previously had COVID-19.
- Scientists are still learning more about how long you might be immune after recovering from COVID-19. Early evidence suggests natural immunity from COVID-19 may not last very long in some people, and cases of reinfection have been reported.
- If you had COVID-19, [the CDC says you may wait a few months after your infection before getting the vaccine.](#) It's unlikely that you will get COVID-19 again during this time. However, you may choose to get the vaccine earlier than that as long as you have recovered from your infection.
- If you received a COVID-19-specific antibody treatment (e.g. monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma) while you were sick with COVID-19, [you should wait at least 90 days](#) after receiving the antibody treatment before getting the vaccine.

- [Learn more about immunity in this FAQ on the CDPHE website.](#)

23. I have seen recommendations to get an additional dose or booster of vaccine. Is this required?

- No, not at this time. Under [Public Health Order 21-005](#), an individual is considered fully vaccinated two calendar weeks after they have received two doses of a mRNA vaccine (Moderna or Pfizer) or one dose of the Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccine.

General Questions

24. Why did the Board of Health implement Public Health Order 21-005?

- As Local Government Workers, we must take necessary steps to protect each other and those we serve by ensuring low risk of spreading COVID-19. Unfortunately, Jefferson County remains a high risk area for COVID-19 transmission based on [CDC's metrics](#).
- As of December 2021, the Omicron variant — which accounts for virtually all COVID-19 cases in the state — has been shown to spread more easily than previous variants and the greatest risk of transmission is among unvaccinated people who are much more likely to contract, and therefore transmit, the virus to others. Medical researchers are still learning more about omicron.

25. What data and evidence supports Public Health Orders 21-005?

- Jefferson County remains in [CDC's high transmission category](#).
 - From January 12-18, 2022, there have been 7,025 new cases of COVID-19 (1,197.6 per 100,000 residents) in Jefferson County.
 - From December 29-January 11, 2021, there have been 2.9 average hospitalizations per 100,000 residents.
 - For the month of December 2021, an average of 4.0 Jefferson County residents died of COVID-19 every day.
 - As of January 4, 2022, 283 Jefferson County residents have died of COVID-19 in the past 100 days.
- As of December 2021, the Omicron variant — which accounts for virtually all COVID-19 cases in the state — has been shown to spread more easily than previous variants and the greatest risk of transmission is among unvaccinated people who are much more likely to contract, and therefore transmit, the virus to others.
 - National, state and local data is clear: the vast majority of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths are among people who are not fully vaccinated. According to the [Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment \(CDPHE\)](#), as of January 2, 2022 people who are vaccinated are 2.0 times less likely to get COVID-19, 11.7 times less likely to be hospitalized due to COVID-19 and 12.9 times less likely to die from COVID-19.

- [View the “Vaccination Data” section of the JCPH Case Summary dashboard](#) for the most up-to-date data.

26. What authority does the Board of Health have to issue Public Health Orders?

Pursuant to Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) 25-1-506 and 508, JCPH has public health jurisdiction over Jefferson County, including all cities and towns therein. In furtherance of its jurisdiction, JCPH has the power and duty to investigate and control the causes of epidemic or communicable diseases and conditions affecting the public health within Jefferson County, as well as the power and duty to close schools and public places and to prohibit gatherings of people when necessary to protect public health, and to establish, maintain, and enforce isolation and quarantine, and in pursuance thereof, to exercise physical control over property and over persons within Jefferson County as JCPH may find necessary for the protection of public health.

27. What happens if I don't comply with Public Health Order 21-005?

Any facility that is in violation of this Order may be subject to a civil action, including but not limited to injunctive relief pursuant to C.R.S. § 25-1-514 and reimbursement of expenses pursuant to C.R.S. §25-1-516(3).

28. I'm concerned about the increasing number of COVID-19 cases. What should I do?

- Widespread vaccination is how we are going to end this pandemic and keep it behind us. Getting a vaccine will help protect yourself and your loved ones. Once you've been vaccinated, you have the upper hand against the virus, because it means that even if you are exposed, you have a very low risk of getting COVID-19. In the rare instance that you do still contract the virus, it likely won't be as severe.
- Other layered viral mitigation strategies, including wearing a mask when visiting indoor public settings and getting tested if you have symptoms or if you have been exposed to an individual who tested positive, can help prevent the spread of COVID-19.
- [Find more tips for preventing the spread of COVID-19 on JCPH's website.](#)