

Lost your COVID-19 vaccine card? Here's what to do

Alia Beard Rau Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

The COVID-19 vaccination card you received is becoming increasingly important to gain access to places like restaurants, concerts and travel destinations.

If you got the shots but have since lost your card, you still have a few options to prove your vaccination status.

For the thousands who got vacci-

nated at the State Fairgrounds in Salem, Salem Health has your records. Log into mychart.salemhealth.org and click on "Your COVID-19 Status." It will allow you to download your vaccination record, which includes the dates and details of your shots.

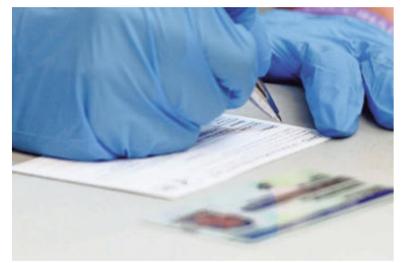
If you got your shots from another clinic or physician's office, contact them and request a copy of your vaccination record.

If those options are unsuccessful, you can request records for both

adults and children from the Oregon Alert Immunization Information System by going to alertiis.org and clicking on forms. Or contact ALERT IIS at 800-980-9431 between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Friday, or email alertiis@state.or.us.

It may take up to five days to get records.

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A COVID-19 vaccination card HENRIETTA WILDSMITH/THE TIMES

Crowded stadiums and COVID-19

Here's what to know before you go

Tom Murphy
Associated Press

More than 65,000 fans packed a stadium in Tampa to watch Tom Brady lead the Buccaneers to a win in the NFL's season opener, just hours after President Joe Biden announced a sweeping new plan to slow the latest COVID-19 surge.

Most people at the open-air stadium Thursday night didn't wear masks. There was no vaccine requirement for fans, something Biden has urged sports and entertainment venues to impose. Many other football stadiums are taking a similarly lax approach to pandemic measures this fall, and that worries health experts.

This fall's crowded college and professional football stadiums could create ripe conditions for COVID-19 to spread among unvaccinated fans, experts say.

The risk of catching or passing a virus that has infected more than 40 million people in the United States will depend on where the stadium is and whether the game is outdoors, among other factors.

How risky are stadiums?

It's difficult to predict how many COVID-19 cases might develop from a single event. That depends partly on infection rates where the venue is located and how many people are vaccinated.

The highly contagious delta variant has triggered a surge in infections this summer that just recently started to taper. The seven-day rolling average for daily new cases in the U.S. sits at about 150,000 after starting September above 167,000, according to Johns Hopkins University.

At those rates, it is "basically a certainty" that there will be at least one infected person at any gathering of a thousand people, epidemiologist Ryan Demmer said.

Many football stadiums seat 60,000 fans or more.

"At any sort of large event like at a football stadium, without question there will be many infected people there," said Demmer of the University of Minnesota School of Public Health.

What are COVID-19 protocols, mandates at Oregon stadiums?

There are no statewide requirements for capacity, masking or any other mitigation efforts for athletic events since Gov. Kate Brown's emergency executive orders lifted in June.

However, Lane County and athletic programs and venues across the state have taken it upon themselves to impose guidelines and requirements for attendees.

Providence Park was the first major venue to announce a requirement for proof of vaccination, or proof of a negative COVID-19 taken within 48 hours, on Aug. 17.

The University of Oregon, Oregon State University and the Rose Quarter in Portland followed with their own announcements of requiring proof of vaccination or a negative test, taken within three days, to get into events.

At UO, this applies to events where "there are more than 200 people in attendance and some or all attendees are members of the public. Therefore, events and activities that involve only UO community members are not sub-



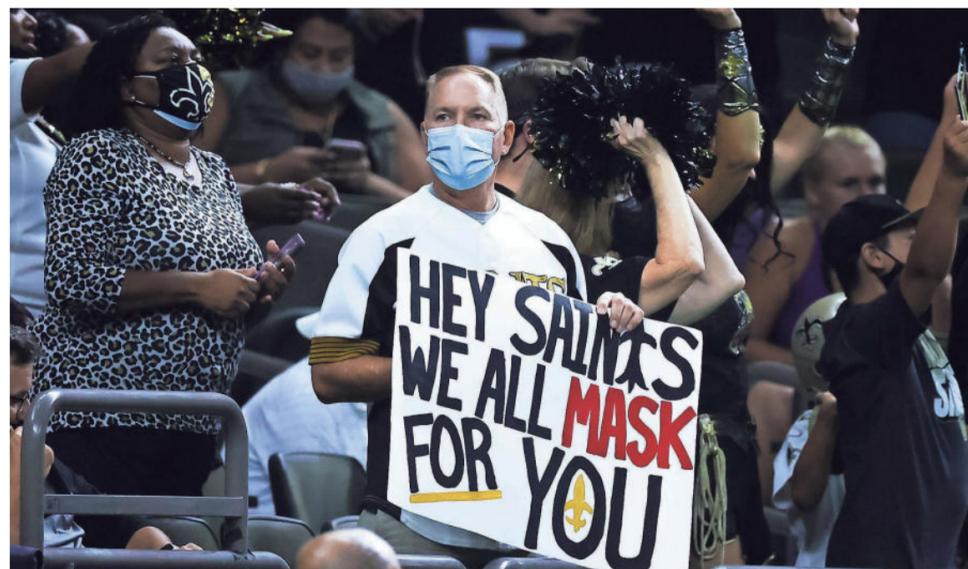
Fans cheer as the Colts take on the Seattle Seahawks on Sunday, Sept. 12, 2021, during the regular season opener at Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis.

JENNA WATSON/INDYSTAR



Fans crowd into Autzen Stadium for the season opener, the first game with fans in nearly two years as smoke from nearby wildfires hangs on the air.

CHRIS PIETSCH/THE REGISTER-GUARD



New Orleans Saints fans show support during the first half against the Jacksonville Jaguars at Caesars Superdome.

STEPHEN LEW, STEPHEN LEW-USA TODAY SPORTS

ject to this regulation," the website states. This includes athletic events.

This falls in line with the new guidance Lane County issued in August, trying to give businesses and individuals a roadmap for what they should do to slow spread of COVID-19 as the county is experiencing a surge.

However, some local venues have not made any requirements, such as the Eugene Emeralds for games at PK Park.

Has COVID-19 spread at other events?

Yes. The Lollapalooza music festival in Chicago drew about 385,000 people in late July. Festivalgoers had to show proof of vaccination or a negative test. Nearly two weeks after the event, city officials reported 203 COVID-19 cases connected to it.

In Wisconsin, health officials have said nearly 500 coronavirus cases may be linked to the crowds that attended Milwaukee Bucks games or gathered outside the arena — estimated as high as 100,000 one night — during the team's push to the NBA championship.

Are venues taking any measures?

The NFL doesn't have a blanket policy for masks or vaccination status for fans. That creates a patchwork of guidelines that each of the 32 teams has developed.

The Las Vegas Raiders, for instance, will require proof of vaccination for all fans 12 and older. The New Orleans Saints and Seattle Seahawks will re-

quire that fans show proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test.

Louisiana State University, a college football powerhouse, has a policy similar to the Saints.

Many teams are asking fans to wear masks indoors but not requiring them while they are in their seats.

Football games are the latest events to resume with full stadiums or arenas, following a summer of concerts, NBA playoff games and baseball.

Do outdoor stadiums eliminate risk?

No. But they are considered safer because air circulates better in them, which can hamper the airborne virus's ability to spread.

That said, there's still an "extremely high chance" an unvaccinated and unmasked fan could wind up with COVID-19 if they sit next to an infected person for three hours or so, even outdoors, said Demmer, the epidemiologist.

Most of the NFL's 30 stadiums are open-air venues.

Four teams have closed roofs — the Detroit Lions, Las Vegas Raiders, New Orleans Saints and Minnesota Vikings — and five have retractable roofs that can be opened or closed.

A stadium that opened last year in Los Angeles and is home to the Chargers and Rams has a canopy-type roof and panels at each end that allow air in and out.

What precautions can fans take?

The biggest measure is becoming fully vaccinated. Doctors say the shots don't eliminate risk, but they lower it considerably, especially when it comes to developing a serious case that requires hospitalization.

"The delta variant is ... so much more contagious that if you've got clusters of unvaccinated people, it's going to rip through them," said Dr. Amesh Adalja of the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security.

Bringing masks and hand sanitizer to the game is a good idea, said Dr. Sharon Wright, chief infection prevention officer at Beth Israel Lahey Health in Boston.

She noted that masks are not perfect, but they offer some protection. They also prevent people from touching their faces.

"Lots of people touch lots of things in sports arenas," she noted.

Once fans get to their seat, they should try to stay there as much as possible to minimize contact with infected people, Demmer said.

"Don't wander around the stadium," he said. "Try not to stand in a lot of concession lines."

The epidemiologist said there is no question that crowded stadiums this fall will lead to more infections, but he also realizes that "we can't live for the next five or 10 years not having large gatherings" because of the virus.

"I just wish everyone would get vaccinated and then we can really move past this once and for all," Demmer said.

Register-Guard reporter Jordyn Brown contributed to this story.

Mandates

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the state to keep it from enforcing vaccination mandates on anyone who has recovered from COVID-19 and has immunity as confirmed by an antibodies test.

The lawsuit asserts that the plaintiffs are being forced to choose between their personal autonomy and their careers. Individuals who do not abide by the vaccine mandates run the risk of termination.

"The state compelling private individuals to submit to any medical procedure against their will is outrageous," Rebekah Millard, litigation counsel for the Freedom Foundation, an anti-union conservative organization that is representing the plaintiffs, said.

Millard went on to say one-size-fits-all mandates are based in politics, not hard science.

The lawsuit makes similar claims, and cites studies and articles from a variety of sources in support.

The lawsuit suggests that "natural" immunity to the virus is at least as effective as immunity gained through vaccination; that the recent surge in cases is due to declining vaccine protection, not the delta variant; and requiring an individual to get vaccinated after they have already had COVID-19 puts them at greater risk for serious side effects.

The lawsuit claims conflict with the positions of national and international health organizations.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends individuals who have had COVID-19 still receive the vaccine. It says research has not yet shown how long a person is protected from the coronavirus after recovering, and the vaccination will help protect them regardless.

The CDC cites a study in Kentucky

from mid-August that concluded that individuals with previous COVID-19 infection who did not get vaccinated were 2.34 times more likely to get re-infected than those who had COVID-19 and did later get vaccinated.

People currently sick with COVID-19 should not receive the vaccine, and those who receive monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma for treatment of COVID-19 should wait 90 days before getting vaccinated, according to the CDC.

"Experts are still learning more about how long vaccines protect against COVID-19," the CDC says on its website.

The lawsuit argues that nonvaccinated individuals who possess antibodies should be treated the same as those who have been vaccinated.

The six plaintiffs are: a school bus driver, two Department of Corrections employees, a Department of Justice assistant special agent in charge, an orthodontics office treatment coordinator and the

chief of Aurora Fire and Rescue, Joshua Williams.

Each claim to have COVID-19 antibodies and five out of the six could identify when they contracted the coronavirus. Five live in Oregon; one lives in Idaho but works in eastern Oregon.

Williams made news last week when he announced he would not follow Brown's mandate that requires his department's firefighters and paramedics to be vaccinated from COVID-19.

He called the move "un-American" and said he would rather be fired than enforce the mandate.

His zip code is facing one of the highest rates of COVID-19 infection in the country.

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