

COVID-19

Little change in risk levels

By GARY A. WARNER
Oregon Capital Bureau

SALEM — Most Oregonians will see no change this week to local COVID-19 risk level restrictions as 30 counties retained their current tiers, Gov. Kate Brown said Tuesday, June 8.

But if about 100,000 more residents get vaccinated, the whole system of do's and don'ts would go away.

"If you have been waiting to get vaccinated, go get your shot today," Brown said. "It's never been easier to get an appointment."

The new weekly COVID-19 risk rankings released showed five counties moving down a level, with just one rising.

Lane, Coos and Wasco counties dropped to lower risk, the least restrictive category. Yamhill and Josephine counties will drop to moderate level.

The changes in the five counties went into effect June 9, sooner than in some previous risk level announcements in prior weeks.

Harney was the only county to move into a more restrictive level. It will be at moderate risk effective June 11.

All other counties remain at their current levels until at least June 17. There will be 21 counties at the lower risk level, four at moderate risk, and 11 at the high risk level. The higher the risk level, the more restrictions meant to limit the spread of COVID-19.

Brown has shifted the emphasis on risk level assignments to include how well a county is doing in

COUNTY RISK CATEGORIES

Effective through June 17

- Lower Risk (21)**
Baker
Benton
Clatsop
Coos (Moved from Moderate)
Curry
Deschutes
Gilliam
Grant
Hood River
Lake
Lane (Moved from Moderate)
Lincoln
Morrow
Multnomah
Sherman
Tillamook
Union
Wallowa

- Wasco (Moved from Moderate)
Washington
Wheeler
Moderate Risk (4)
Harney (Moved from Lower)
Josephine (Moved from High)
Polk
Yamhill (Moved from High)
High Risk (11)
Clackamas
Columbia
Crook
Douglas
Jackson
Jefferson
Klamath
Linn
Malheur
Marion
Umatilla

vaccinating residents.

Counties that can show they had administered at least one shot to 65% of eligible adult residents are allowed to drop to the lower risk level regardless of infection rates in their county.

Most Oregon residents have been inoculated with the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, which are administered in two shots separated by about one month. Those receiving the Johnson & Johnson vaccine receive just one shot.

Deschutes, Multnomah, Washington, Benton, Lincoln and Hood River have all surpassed the 65% threshold.

Lane County is at 64%. Clackamas, Polk, Tillamook and Clatsop are above 60%.

The four lowest county vaccination rates are Lake, Malheur, Umatilla and Gilliam, with each having administered one shot to 39% or less of residents.

Union County's vaccination rate is just 43%, while Wallowa County is 54.7%,

according to the Oregon Health Authority website.

Brown has said when 70% of all eligible state residents have at least one shot of vaccine, she'll lift nearly all restrictions on businesses, schools, events and restaurants.

Late June 8, Brown touted that 67.1% of eligible adult Oregonians had received at least a shot.

"We need 97,168 more people to get their shot," she wrote on Twitter. Like many states, Oregon is offering prizes for those inoculated. One person will receive \$1 million, while one person in each of the 36 counties will get \$10,000. The state is also offering five \$100,000 Oregon College Savings Plan scholarships to vaccinated youths.

The drawing will take place June 28, with winners announced the following week. Anyone in the state's vaccination registration system by midnight June 27 is eligible.



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