

# Governor announces vaccination measures to address hospital crisis, help keep students safe

*Health care workers, K-12 educators, staff and volunteers required to be fully vaccinated*

PORTLAND—On Aug. 19, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown announced two new vaccination measures to address Oregon's hospital crisis, caused by the Delta variant surge, and to help keep Oregon students safe in the upcoming school year and minimize disruptions to in-person instruction:

Oregon's vaccination requirement for health care workers will no longer have a testing alternative.

Health care workers will be required to be fully vaccinated by Oct. 18 or six weeks after full FDA approval, whichever is later.

In addition, all teachers, educators, support staff, and volunteers in K-12 schools will be required

to be fully vaccinated by Oct. 18 or six weeks after full FDA approval, whichever is later.

"The Delta variant has put enormous pressure on our health systems, and health care workers are being stretched to their absolute limits providing life-saving treatment for the patients in their care," said Brown. "I am devoting all available resources to help, and we must proactively implement solutions right now. We need every single frontline health care worker healthy and available to treat patients."

In both cases, health care workers and educators who are not yet vaccinated are urged to speak with their doctor or primary care

provider to get their remaining questions about vaccination answered immediately, so they can begin the vaccination process in time to meet the new requirements.

In the case of educators, the governor outlined the importance of masks and staff vaccinations to protect students: because children under 12 are still not yet eligible for vaccination, masks are a critical mitigation measure to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Ensuring all the adults around students are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 adds another layer of protection for students as well.

"Our kids need to be in the class-

room full-time, five days a week, and we have to do everything we can to make that happen," said Brown. "While we are still learning about the Delta variant, we know from previous experience that when schools open with safety measures in place, the risk of transmission is low. That's why I've directed the Oregon Health Authority to issue a rule requiring all teachers, educators, support staff, and volunteers in K-12 schools to be fully vaccinated."

The governor also outlined the steps Oregon is taking to support hospitals during the ongoing surge in cases and hospitalizations, including deploying the National Guard and nurse strike

teams, establishing temporary decompression units to free up bed space, and removing barriers to discharging patients who no longer require hospital-level care. Oregon has also made requests to FEMA and the Biden-Harris administration for additional federal resources and support. The governor announced she has formed a Hospital Crisis Prevention and Response group consisting of health care stakeholders to problem solve in real time and suggest new measures to aid health care workers and hospitals during the ongoing hospital crisis.

Learn more at [www.governor.oregon.gov](http://www.governor.oregon.gov).

**RALLY from page 1A**

the vaccine mandates for health care workers. From a few clicks and shares on Facebook, the event reached protesters from throughout Lane County who assembled on the corners of Highways 101 and 126.

People who participated in the event said they disagreed with Brown's ruling and believed their freedom of choice was taken away.

In states like New York and California, similar protests have emerged from groups who have expressed resistance against COVID-19 vaccine mandates for health care workers.

However, understaffing and the health of patients has grown in concern during

the recent resurgence of COVID-19, which has led to a vital moment where medical workers are needed.

"This new safety measure is necessary to stop Delta from causing severe illness among our first line of defense: our doctors, nurses, medical students and frontline health care workers," Brown said.

The local event ran from 10 a.m. through 3 p.m., with approximately 35 people who rallied, including children. Messaging on the signs included "My Body, My Choice," "Medical Freedom," "Freedom to Choose" and "Where There's Risk There Must Be Choice." One sign, carried by a woman in medical scrubs, said, "2020 Hero, 2021 Fired."



**People stood at the corners of Highways 101 and 126 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. to show their discontent with vaccination mandates.**

During the rally, drivers honked from their cars and held their thumbs up in support of the cause. Participants whistled and waved back. Not everyone agreed with

the event, prompting the participants to respond to taunts from people driving by. In particular, protesters said, "Go vax [vaccinate] yourself" in response to some raised middle fingers.

The event also featured some chants of "Freedom!" and other phrases.

Earlier this month, Lane County Public Health began offering a \$50 Visa gift card incentive to anyone over

the age of 12 who gets the vaccine from a Lane County Public Health vaccine clinic. As of Sunday, Aug. 22, roughly 233,865 people have been vaccinated out of Lane County's population of 381,365, according to the Oregon Health Authority. At 61.7 percent, this means more than half the population is vaccinated.

To learn more about COVID-19 and vaccines, visit [healthoregon.org/coronavirus](http://healthoregon.org/coronavirus) and [covidvaccine.oregon.gov](http://covidvaccine.oregon.gov), as well as [lanecounty.org/coronavirus](http://lanecounty.org/coronavirus) and [lanecounty.org/vaxclinics](http://lanecounty.org/vaxclinics).

The article about FDA approving the Pfizer vaccine can be found at [www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-approves-first-covid-19-vaccine](http://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-approves-first-covid-19-vaccine).

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**MEETING from page 1A**

"By holding the special meeting, it will give community members a chance to be heard sooner," Sneddon said.

The meeting is currently planned to be held at the Siuslaw Middle School "commons" area, which is outdoors, and there will be no action items on the

agenda, only time set aside to take public comment.

The regular guidelines for public comment will be observed. People will speak only once and their comments will be limited to a maximum of three minutes. Comment can be provided on any topic.

For more information, visit [www.siuslaw.k12.or.us](http://www.siuslaw.k12.or.us).

**EVENT from page 1A**

outdoors, and would have included live music and a corn hole tournament.

"As you can imagine, we are all disappointed that we need to cancel this event," said Assistant City Manager Megan Messmer. "It is in the best interest for the health and safety of our community members that we make this

decision."

Since the city had already purchased food and supplies for the event, Messmer said staff are creating a plan to "share that with the community."

"We look forward to a time that we can come together and celebrate all our community has to offer," she said. "In order to do so, we need to be healthy. Please help us take care of our friends and neighbors by following the public health guidelines so that we can get together soon."

For more information about the City of Florence, visit [ci.florence.or.us](http://ci.florence.or.us). For more information about the Florence Events Center, visit [eventcenter.org](http://eventcenter.org).

**Deadline for Press Releases Is Every Monday and Thursday by Noon.**

**Email [PRESSRELEASES@THESIUSLAWNEWS.COM](mailto:PRESSRELEASES@THESIUSLAWNEWS.COM).**

**8th Annual Florence Area COMMUNITY-WIDE GARAGE SALE!**

**September 10 -12, 2021**

**How To Participate**

The fee to participate is \$20. An ad for the Community Wide Garage Sale with a map of all participation sales will be published in the Siuslaw News on September 4th and 8th. Because of print deadlines, the registration deadline is 5pm Tuesday August 31 2021.

You will also receive two official Community Wide Garage Sale signs as well as a tip sheet on how to have a great sale. Maps will be available in the Siuslaw News, online and at the Florence Visitors Center.

*Please post signs only on private property with the owner's consent. Posting signs on City utility poles, street or signal light poles, and median strips is against the municipal code.*

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Subdivision name (if any) \_\_\_\_\_

Dates (CIRCLE):      Friday 9/10      Saturday 9/11      Sunday 9/12

Times: \_\_\_\_\_

15-word description:(Date, times and address are included. Addition words over 15 are \$0.50 each.)

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