

# THE WAY BACK TO NORMAL

## SAFE, EFFECTIVE VACCINES

**After reopening this Spring, Illinois now faces a surge in COVID cases due to the Delta Variant—to get back to normal, the plain truth is that we all need to be vaccinated against COVID.**

If you aren't yet, the time is now. And if you are, please talk to your family members, friends, neighbors, and co-workers to encourage them to get vaccinated as well.

Remind them that the COVID vaccines available in the United States that have been approved or authorized by the FDA after rigorous testing have been found to be safe and effective.

**Delta is currently the predominant variant of the virus in the US. This variant is of serious concern- and additional variants have been identified.**

The Delta variant is highly infectious and spreads faster – by 225% -than earlier forms of COVID. Some data suggests that the Delta variant might cause more severe illness than previous variants in unvaccinated individuals. Low vaccination coverage is driving the current rapid surge of cases in communities across the Illinois- putting a significant strain on the state's hospital system and healthcare workers. Vaccination is key to slowing the transmission rate of the virus, which means fewer opportunities for mutation and the emergence of new variants.

**More than 77% of Illinois residents aged 12+ have received at least their initial dose and nearly 6.6 million are fully vaccinated.**

Everyone 12 years of age and older is now eligible for one of the safe, effective COVID vaccines. More than 208 million people (63% of the population) in the U.S. have received at least one dose of vaccine. Of that entire number, adverse reactions have been extremely rare—most people report minor symptoms such as arm soreness or mild flulike effects that last a day or two.

**The highly effective vaccines ramp up protection—way up!**

Studies have proven that the vaccines are highly effective at preventing severe disease and death, including against the Delta variant. That's why getting vaccinated is the right choice for almost everyone—even if you previously had COVID and recovered, even if you're young and healthy. The exception are those individuals who are highly allergic to other vaccines or the ingredients of the COVID vaccine. If you have questions about any underlying health conditions, consult with your doctor, as getting vaccinated may still be right for you.



**For more information and answers to common questions, visit: [AFSCME31.org/vax](https://AFSCME31.org/vax).**