



News Release

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Governor Lamont and Public Health Commissioner Gifford Express Concern Over COVID-19 Outbreaks – Highlight Reduced Risk For Vaccinated Persons

HARTFORD, Conn. – Governor Ned Lamont and Deidre S. Gifford, MD, MPH, senior advisor to the Governor for Health and Human Services and acting commissioner of the Department of Public Health, are expressing concern with recent COVID-19 outbreaks among vaccinated and unvaccinated persons in Connecticut.

The outbreaks have several things in common:

1. Unvaccinated persons were more likely to become infected than vaccinated persons.
2. Mask use was not consistent.
3. Indoor activities resulting in close contact with unvaccinated individuals who are not wearing masks can lead to [disease transmission](#).
4. Outbreaks can result in transmission of the illness to family members and others who did not participate in the activities that led to the initial outbreak.

As we enter the fall, with back to school, holidays, and influenza season on the horizon, the Department of Public Health is reminding everyone of the importance of taking continued precautions against the Delta variant.

The recent outbreaks include:

- Thirteen cases have been identified in association with an overnight summer camp in August this year. This included seven campers, four staff members and two family members of campers. Out of the six cases that were eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine (the staff members and family members), two of them were fully vaccinated. Campers had most daily activities outside but slept inside cabins at night.
- A group home experienced a cluster of 17 cases, including 14 residents and three staff members in August. None of the staff members were fully vaccinated, while 12 of the residents were fully vaccinated. Of this group of 17, four residents and one staff member were hospitalized. Of the five hospitalized individuals, two of the residents and the staff member were unvaccinated. There was inconsistent masking within this facility.
- An August party of 11 attendees resulted in five COVID-19 cases. Two family members—who were not at the party—were in close contact with one of the positive individuals and they were then diagnosed with COVID. Of these seven total cases, six were unvaccinated, despite being eligible to get the vaccine. The party was held outdoors with no masking or physical distancing. This cluster resulted in the cancellation of school sports teams' practices to curb transmission. (more)

DPH reminds Connecticut residents that social gatherings with a mix of vaccinated and unvaccinated should be held outdoors. The Centers for Disease Control has [additional recommendations](#) for those who have been within 6 feet of a COVID positive individual.

Because the entire state of Connecticut continues to be classified as either “substantial” or “high” transmission by the CDC, indoor gatherings should include masks regardless of vaccination status. Unvaccinated children are susceptible to COVID-19, and it is recommended that those 12 and older and get vaccinated at the earliest opportunity.

Vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals at high risk for complications from COVID-19, including those with compromised immune systems, diabetes, asthma, other lung diseases, pregnancy, or obesity, should avoid large indoor gatherings that may include a mix of vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals.

Vaccination remains the most important defense against illness and hospitalization from COVID-19. Unvaccinated individuals are four to five times more likely to be hospitalized than those who are vaccinated. Most hospitalizations and deaths in Connecticut and around the country are with unvaccinated individuals. DPH strongly recommends that unvaccinated individuals get vaccinated as soon as possible to help stop the ongoing spread of the Delta variant.

As of Thursday, Sept. 9, the CDC has listed five Connecticut counties in the “High Transmission” category of COVID-19 including Hartford, Litchfield, New Haven, New London and Windham Counties,

The High Transmission category—which is the most severe as defined by the CDC—is 100 or more cases per 100,000 people or a positivity rate of 10 percent or higher over the past seven days.

Fairfield, Middlesex and Tolland counties [are classified by the CDC](#) as being in the “Substantial Transmission” category. The Substantial Transmission category is 50 to 100 cases per 100,000, or a positivity rate between 8 and 10 percent over the past seven days.