



Public Health Statement – President Gallagher  
Meeting of the Board of Trustees  
Monday, March 8, 2021

National Report:

On March 6, the U.S. Senate passed a \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 Relief Bill. The bill now goes to the U.S. House on Tuesday for a vote before it is sent to President Biden to sign into law. Key provisions of the bill include \$1400 relief checks for middle and lower income Americans, \$70 billion to increase vaccine distribution and coronavirus testing, and an extension of unemployment insurance through most of the summer. President Biden recently stated that the US expects to have enough coronavirus vaccines to inoculate all adult Americans by the end of May.

State and Regional Statistics:

On March 5, Governor Pritzker signed a new proclamation extending the statewide disaster declaration and related executive orders through April 3, 2021. The entire state remains in Phase 4 of the Restore Illinois Plan. Our region's metrics used to determine the applicable phase of the Governor's "Restore Illinois" plan continue to be positive and project future continuity and progress toward the final phase, Phase 5. As a reminder, those metrics include COVID-19 admissions to the region's hospitals, the available surge capacity at the region's hospitals, and the region's COVID-19 test positivity rate, all of which are well below the triggering point for stricter mitigations for Region 10.

Statewide, seven-day test positivity from February 26 through March 4 is 2.8%. Region 10 seven-day test positivity for the same time period is 3.3%. Over the course of the pandemic, there have been a total of 13,634 test administered and 989 positive cases in Western Springs. These numbers represent the most current data available on the IDPH website as of this morning.

Vaccine Plan:

Illinois remains in Phase 1B of the state's vaccination distribution plan, which includes all persons age 65 and older, frontline essential workers, and individuals age 16 to 64, who are not otherwise eligible, that have comorbidities, underlying conditions or disabilities. Cook County excluded individuals with underlying conditions from Phase 1B. I hope with increased vaccine supplies the County will reverse this policy decision.

As of today, the State of Illinois has administered more than 3,300,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccinations. I am pleased to report that, in response to the challenges many seniors face in securing appointments, a COVID-19 vaccine clinic for Western Springs residents aged 65 and older. Special thanks to Senior Center Coordinator Mic Cagney, Director Ellen Baer, Communications Manager Selmin Cicek, School District 101 administration, and especially Anne Martin Hill in that department, for undertaking this ambitious task to bring the vaccine to our senior residents.

Interested individuals should send an email to the following email address: [vaccine@d101.org](mailto:vaccine@d101.org) They will then receive an online form that captures contact information, so a link to a sign up for the clinic can be sent. Anyone without an email address can call the School District 101 office at [708-246-3700](tel:708-246-3700) for assistance. If you leave a message, someone will get back to you. Senior citizens outside of Western Springs may also request an appointment, in hopes that there are enough vaccine doses for all of those interested in receiving one.]

In other vaccine news, a new mass vaccination site in Des Plaines opened on Friday. This site administers the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, which is a one-dose vaccine proven effective in preventing severe illness and death.

Today, the CDC issued guidance for fully vaccinated individuals. People are considered fully vaccinated 2 weeks after their final dose, whether it is a one- or two-dose vaccine. If you are not fully vaccinated,, you are NOT fully protected. Keep taking all [prevention steps](#) until you are fully vaccinated.

Once you are fully vaccinated, the CDC advises:

- You can gather indoors with fully vaccinated people without wearing a mask.
- You can gather indoors with unvaccinated people from one other household (for example, visiting with relatives who all live together) without masks.
- If you've been around someone who has COVID-19, you do not need to stay away from others or get tested unless you have symptoms.

For now, even for fully vaccinated people, the CDC still recommends:

- Taking precautionary steps to [protect yourself and others](#) in many situations, like wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet apart from others, and avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces.
- Avoiding medium or large-sized gatherings.
- Delaying domestic and international travel.
- Watching out for [symptoms of COVID-19](#), especially if you've been around someone who is sick. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, you should get tested and stay home and away from others.
- Following guidance at your workplace.

The CDC is still learning about different aspects of the vaccines' effectiveness. For instance, the vaccines have proven effective at preventing COVID-19 disease, especially severe illness and death. But it is yet to be known just how effective the vaccines are against variants of the virus. The CDC is still learning how well COVID-19 vaccines keep people from spreading the disease and how long COVID-19 vaccines can protect people.

Until more is known, the CDC advises that everyone — even people who've had their vaccines — should continue taking [basic prevention steps](#) when recommended: socially distance, wash hands, wear masks. In regard to mask-wearing, the CDC now recommends wearing two masks - a disposable mask under a cloth mask - to improve fit & give you better protection from COVID-19.