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**JCDHE encourages boosters as eligibility In Kansas increases to
fully vaccinated people 18 and over
*JCDHE also encourages gathering safely this holiday season***

(JOHNSON COUNTY, Kansas – Nov. 17) Today, the state of Kansas announced all fully vaccinated Kansans over the age of 18 are now eligible for a COVID-19 booster. Johnson County residents 18 and older who are six months past their last Pfizer or Moderna vaccine or two months past their Johnson & Johnson vaccination, can now get a booster shot. The Johnson County Department of Health and Environment urges eligible residents to consider a booster, and all residents to assess their risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19 before getting together this holiday season.

“Consideration on get togethers should be given to age, health conditions and vaccination status of everyone getting together. And wear masks consistently to minimize risk,” said JCDHE Director Sanmi Areola. “Many of us missed getting together with loved ones last year and are ready to get back to normal. This is a good thing, but the pandemic is not over. Cases are on the rise in Johnson County, and many other places. This is not the time to let our guard down as we move indoors where the virus can spread easily.”

Areola recommends a layered approach to prevent getting infected with COVID-19 or the flu and spreading the virus to others, especially family members who may be immunocompromised and vulnerable to severe infection and complications of COVID-19.

The department recommends the following actions to stay safe this holiday season:

- **Get vaccinated** to protect those who are not eligible for vaccination, such as young children. You can get a COVID-19 (age 5+) and flu (age 6 months and older) vaccine at the same visit. If you’re age 18 or older and fully vaccinated against COVID-19, get a booster shot now so you’re protected during the holidays. While vaccination appointments are available at pharmacies and health care providers, you can visit www.jocogov.org/covid-19-vaccine to learn more or make an appointment.
- If you’re experiencing symptoms of illness or have been told you were exposed to someone with COVID-19, **get tested**. COVID-19 testing is widely available at pharmacies, clinics and health departments. Home test kits are also available for purchase.

- **Wear a mask** if you're gathering indoors with others from multiple households or there are family members with weakened immune systems. Masks are also recommended in an indoor public place, such as a grocery store, mall or sporting event.
- If you're hosting a gathering, **increase ventilation** by opening windows or gathering outdoors, weather permitting.
- **Wash hands** frequently, especially around food and utensils.
- **Stay home if you're sick**, even if you have mild symptoms.

JCDHE is taking the following actions to ensure vaccination equity:

- **Those with transportation needs.** JCDHE will continue to offer transportation to any JCDHE vaccine clinic for those needing it. This service can be requested by calling 913-715-2819.
- **Homebound population:** JCDHE's Outreach Nurses offer this service. It can be requested by calling 913-715-2819.

Those with questions about vaccines and residents in need of assistance to schedule appointments can call 913-715-2819 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. They can also send an email to jcdhe@jocogov.org. Emails are answered 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Spanish speakers will be available to answer calls or emails.

Those who are eligible can search for a nearby vaccine provider by visiting [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov), texting their ZIP code to 438829 or calling 1-800-232-0233.

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