

STRONGER TOGETHER

MOStopsCovid.com

State of Missouri Team Members:

In some ways, it feels like it was yesterday. In other ways, the first COVID-19 case in Missouri feels like a decade ago. We have learned an incredible amount about this virus in that time. We have adapted. Missourians are now gaining protection through vaccination. It is one of the greatest public health accomplishments of all time.

We initially briefed Governor Parson on what was being called the novel coronavirus on Jan. 28, 2020. This came after we set up our incident command structure at DHSS a week prior and immediately took steps to prepare for what lay ahead.

Missouri's first positive case was identified on March 7. Since then, Governor Parson's administration, Missouri's 16 executive agencies, and several stakeholders from across the state have worked together to respond, rebuild, and recover.



<https://vimeo.com/521605321>

In the past year, the state has taken many actions to respond and adapt to COVID-19:

- The Cabinet and every state agency worked together to coordinate statewide response efforts
- Convened weekly calls for over 10 straight months with community leaders and medical experts
- Waived nearly 600 statutes and regulations to provide more flexibility and safety
- Significantly expanded COVID-19 testing to over 100,000 a week
- Mobilized the Missouri National Guard to assist with response efforts
- Constructed an alternate care site in 11 days to assist hospitals in the St. Louis region
- Launched the Show Me Strong Recovery Plan to support Missouri citizens, businesses, and communities
- Distributed \$520 million in CARES Act funds to local jurisdictions within 10 days
- Helped secure over \$11 billion in low-interest loans for Missouri small businesses through the SBA
- Delivered Remdesivir to hospitals across the state.
- Brought in additional health care staff to further expand hospital capacity
- Partnered with Google to launch the PPE Marketplace
- Shipped over 315,000 cases of PPE to frontline health care providers. This included 24 million gowns, 20 million gloves, 8.5 million surgical masks, 5.7 million N95 masks, and 1.6 million face shields
- One of the first states in the nation to submit a comprehensive COVID-19 vaccine plan to the CDC

In recent weeks, Missouri has seen significant declines in virus activity across the state. Missouri is currently second lowest in the nation for average daily cases. The state's seven-day positivity rate has fallen to 4.5 percent – down from a high of 24 percent in November 2020.

Hospitalizations also continue to decline, falling below 1,000 last week for the first time since September 2020. On February 28, Missouri hospitals reported 989 hospitalized patients. This was a 64 percent decrease since the first week of January.

The state also continues to make progress with COVID-19 vaccine administration efforts. Missouri received national recognition on its COVID-19 vaccine plan, submitted to the CDC in October 2020. Our plan was used as a framework by other states in developing their own plans.

We launched [MOPStopsCOVID.com](https://moplastopsCOVID.com) in November 2020 before vaccines arrived in Missouri. It provides Missourians with accurate information about the safety of the vaccines, research and production processes, and when they may be eligible for vaccination.

In February, the state launched the [Missouri Vaccine Navigator](#). It is a secure registry tool to assist Missourians in receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. The navigator helps streamline the vaccination process by notifying registrants upon activation of each phase. It also alerts them when they become eligible and reminds them to return for their second dose if needed.

To date, Missouri providers have administered more than 1.53 million total doses of the COVID-19 vaccine to citizens. Nearly 16.5 percent, or more than **one million**, of Missourians have received an initial vaccine dose. More than 530,000 Missourians have been fully vaccinated. More than 49 percent of all Missourians 65 and older have received an initial vaccination.

According to CDC data, which includes the latest doses administered through federal partnerships, Missouri has administered more than 1.6 million doses. Over 21 percent of Missouri's 18 and older population has received an initial vaccination.

Governor Parson recently announced local state pharmacies will begin receiving prioritized vaccine shipments. This comes through a new state pharmacy program. Missouri also continues to partner with health centers, local health departments, hospitals, and other community providers to ensure fair distribution among the state's nine regions.

To reach areas with limited access to health care, the state has partnered with local health care agencies. They will host mass vaccination events in each of Missouri's nine regions as well as targeted vaccination events in St. Louis and Kansas City. As of March 7, 108 mass vaccination and 55 targeted vaccination clinics have been completed. More than 130,000 total doses were administered.

While COVID-19 is not yet a thing of the past, great progress is being made every day in this state. Please keep up with the tried and true prevention methods we have been preaching for the last year. Very soon, we will be back to enjoying all the things we love with the people we love.

In good health,

Dr. Randall Williams

DHSS Director