

# Governor Pritzker vaccinated as positivity rate rises in Illinois

Governor received one-dose shot in Springfield

By Jerry Nowicki  
Capitol News Illinois

Gov. JB Pritzker received a COVID-19 vaccine and briefly took questions from reporters at the Illinois State Fairgrounds on Wednesday as the state's seven-day rolling average COVID-19 positivity rate ticked up to its highest point since Feb. 11.

The 2.8 percent case positivity rate represented an increase of 0.3 percent from the day prior and 0.7 percent from its low of 11 days earlier – a 25 percent increase in that span. There were 1,261 hospital beds in use for COVID-19 as of Tuesday night, roughly level from the day prior but a 14 percent increase since March 12. There were 269 intensive care unit beds in use by COVID-19 patients and 130 ventilators, both near their highs of the month.

The 2,793 new confirmed or probable cases of COVID-19 diagnosed over the previous 24 hours marked the highest one-day total since Feb. 11. That made for a 3.5 percent one-day positivity rate as 79,381 test results were reported.

Pritzker received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine at the Illinois State Fairgrounds, a one-dose shot that is being more widely distributed across the state, he said.

As of Wednesday, more than 5 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine had been administered in Illinois, while 66 percent of seniors and 32 percent of Illinoisans 16 years of age and older had received at least one dose. The seven-day rolling average for vaccine doses administered was 97,680 as of Wednesday.

The state is scheduled to expand vaccine eligibility to all residents age 16 and over on April 12. Appointment information can be found at coronavirus.illinois.gov or by calling 833-621-1284.

“Look, I’m not a doctor, but I trust doctors. And thanks to the great work of our doctors, researchers, and public health scientists, these vaccines offer us all the fastest way back to normal life,” Pritzker said, telling the public “I’m not asking you to do anything that I wouldn’t do myself,” before receiving his vaccine.

Last week, Pritzker announced a “bridge” phase between the current COVID-19 capacity limits and Phase 5, in which all capacity limits are lifted. The bridge phase can begin when 70 percent of seniors are vaccinated, provided COVID-19 transmission and death trends do not reverse.

Per the bridge phase, the largest capacity increase is to social events, which can allow 250 peo-

ple indoors and 500 outdoors. Previously, those were capped at 50 people. Ticketed recreation events are allowed to hold 60 percent of the facility’s capacity.

Restaurants and bars can increase capacity from 25 percent to 30 percent, and outdoor capacity is allowed up to 50 percent for standing areas. In seating areas, parties of up to 10 are allowed and different parties must be seated six feet apart.

Most other capacities at businesses would increase to 60 percent.

Per a news release from the governor’s office, to advance into the bridge phase, the entire state must maintain a 20 percent ICU bed availability rate and “hold steady on COVID-19 and COVID-like illness hospital admissions, mortality rate, and case rate over a 28-day monitoring period.”

A spokesperson for the governor’s office said the Illinois Department of Public Health website was being updated Wednesday to better demonstrate where the state stands on the metrics that could disqualify it from entering the bridge phase.

On Wednesday morn-

ing the website showed hospitalizations were trending upward, but it did not appear that the state was meeting the 150 new daily admissions threshold that would warrant a reversal of entering the bridge phase. A spokesperson for the Illinois Department of Public Health told Capitol News Illinois they were checking on the public reporting of new hospital admissions as of Wednesday afternoon.

While the governor’s office said in a news release that announced the bridge phase that “all regions of the state will move through the bridge phase and ultimately to Phase 5, together,” the governor said Wednesday regions may revert back to previous phases individually if they see a surge.

“Right now we’re on course, we’re still following the guidance that we’ve set out for everybody,” he said. “If for some reason we need to halt and move some region back into a previous phase because the numbers are going way up and beyond the guidelines that we set out for those phases, then you know we’ll have to do that but that’s not where we are now.”



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The governor said he is keeping an eye on the increasing positivity rate, particularly as new variants continue to become more prevalent as the virus mutates.

“I don’t expect us to get there,” he said of needing to impose regional restrictions, “but also I’ve been to this movie before,

and seeing, you know, the rising positivity rates. And I’m concerned about it. We’ve got to be careful about the variants, and I am concerned, I must tell you, as I see numbers go up. Is that the variants? Is it a blip in the data? What is it exactly?”

Pritzker said the state will “keep watching close-

ly.” As of Wednesday, the IDPH website reported the state had identified 176 cases of variant COVID-19 strains, 167 of which were the mutation first recognized in the United Kingdom.

Pritzker warned that mitigation measures are still be necessary, especially as numbers climb and activity increases.

“But I can tell you, there is more activity going on and I think people maybe are being a little less careful, and I want to remind everybody, please keep your distance, please continue to wear your mask, please be respectful of others,” he said.

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Reports	14,360
Properties	984,758
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### Illinois Amish Heritage Center Schoolhouse Move rescheduled



Due to inclement weather, the IAHC was forced to postpone the moving of the historic Miller Amish German schoolhouse.

**Move is now planned for April 9.**

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