

# Governor Ron DeSantis Highlights Florida Leading in Prioritizing Seniors

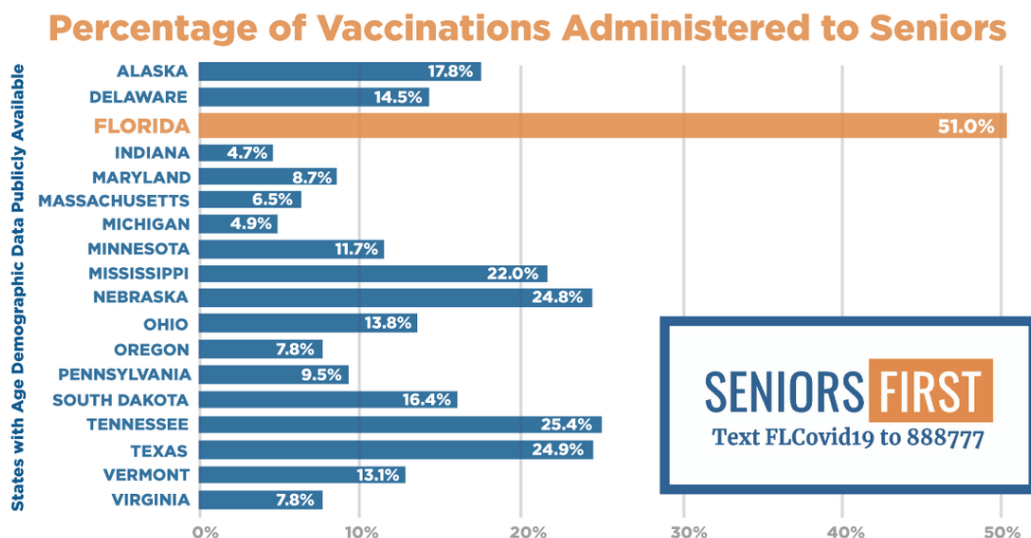
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*Florida leading the nation on vaccinations of seniors 65+ based on publicly available data from other states*

**Tallahassee, Fla.** – Today, as Florida enters its fifth week of vaccine distribution, Governor Ron DeSantis highlighted Florida’s progress on vaccinating seniors age 65 and older. Since the beginning of the public health emergency, Governor DeSantis has put Florida’s *Seniors First* and directed that individuals 65 and older be prioritized to receive the vaccine. As a result of this direction, more than 301,000 individuals age 65 and older have been vaccinated in Florida – more than 50 percent of the total vaccinated in the state. This is an increase of more than 223,000 seniors over the course of one week.

According to publicly available age demographic data, Florida has the highest percentage of vaccine doses administered to seniors 65 and older. Additionally, last week (week 4), more than 327,000 individuals were vaccinated in Florida – more than the entire number of individuals who were vaccinated in the first three weeks of the vaccine being available in the Sunshine State.

“Florida is putting Seniors First and more than 50 percent of the total vaccinations administered in the state have been for individuals 65 and older, and we continue to accelerate this rate,” **said Governor DeSantis.** “Last week, Florida vaccinated 223,000 seniors, which was nearly 70 percent of the people vaccinated in week four. We have nearly 4.5 million seniors in the state and prioritizing them for the vaccine is the most effective tool we have to battle the pandemic. Both nationwide and in Florida, seniors 65 and older account for more than 80 percent of all COVID-related deaths. Although the vaccine supply from the federal government remains limited, we are remaining proactive so that when additional supply does come, our infrastructure will be able to process it.”



Florida: Data displayed through January 10; for data through January 9, 49.4% of vaccinations were administered to seniors. All Other States: Data displayed through January 9.

These increases in vaccinations both for the senior community and for all Floridians is a direct result of Governor DeSantis' efforts to accelerate vaccinations and increase vaccination sites accessible to the broader senior population:

- Governor DeSantis [announced](#) a state partnership with Publix Supermarkets to establish COVID-19 vaccination sites through a new pilot program at 22 of their stores in Marion, Hernando and Citrus counties.
- Governor DeSantis directed the Florida Division of Emergency Management to work with the Florida Department of Health to identify state-run COVID-19 testing sites that can convert into vaccine sites. The first of these opened at the [Miami Hard Rock Stadium](#) last week. The site will offer 1,000 doses of the vaccine per day.
- Governor DeSantis [directed](#) the Florida Division of Emergency Management to identify places of worship and other locations in underserved communities where the vaccine may be administered. Seven sites were identified and have the capacity to administer 500 doses each of the vaccine per day. The locations are:
  - Lynn Haven Senior Center, 905 Pennsylvania Ave. Lynn Haven, FL 32444
  - New Mount Olive Baptist Church, 400 NW 9th Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311
  - Koinonia Worship Center, 4900 W. Hallandale Beach Blvd Hollywood, FL 33023
  - Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, 501 W. Orange Ave. Tallahassee, FL 32310
  - John Progressive Missionary Baptist Church, 2504 Chipco St. Tampa, FL 33605
  - Bernadette Catholic Church, 350 NW California Blvd. Port St. Lucie, FL 34986
  - Matthew Baptist Church, 3811 Moncrief Rd. Jacksonville, FL 32209
- Governor DeSantis [directed](#) the Florida Division of Emergency Management to immediately hire 1,000 contract nurses to support vaccination efforts. These nurses are being deployed throughout the entire state to help run vaccination sites. These nurses will supplement the many personnel already in the field, including 800 Florida National Guardsmen, who have been supporting the state's response since the beginning of the pandemic.
- Governor DeSantis [directed](#) the Florida Division of Emergency Management to assume additional responsibilities regarding the administration of vaccines in more than 4,000 long-term care facilities across the state. These efforts will supplement and accelerate the vaccinations being undertaken by CVS and Walgreens, pursuant to their agreement with the federal government.
- Governor DeSantis [announced](#) the opening of two new vaccination sites operated by Ascension Sacred Heart Hospital – one at Pensacola's Olive Baptist Church, and the other at the Milton Community Center.

To receive text alerts regarding vaccine distribution, text FLCOVID19 to 888777.

All vaccine reports can be found here – [Vaccine Summaries | Florida Disaster](#).