August 3, 2021
Social Media Toolkit on the Delta Variant and
the Statewide Mask Mandate

The Louisiana Department of Health warns that COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations among people who are not yet fully vaccinated are surging, and all people in Louisiana, especially those who are not yet vaccinated, are at an elevated risk of exposure to COVID-19 as the significantly more contagious Delta variant continues to spread. Delta is now the dominant strain of COVID in our country and region, making up 83% of COVID cases in our region.

As of August 2, 2021, Louisiana is #1 nationwide for the number of new COVID cases per capita. The White House has declared Louisiana a "State of Concern." The Delta variant is more than 2x as transmissible as the original strains of COVID-19 and that plus our insufficient vaccination rate is causing large, rapid increases in infections and hospitalizations that are compromising the capacity of our hospitals to provide care to the communities they serve.

KEY MESSAGES

- The overwhelming number of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths are among unvaccinated individuals. If you're vaccinated, you have very good (but not absolute) protection against getting COVID-19 and the Delta variant and excellent protection against severe outcomes - hospitalization and death. The latest CDC data show that if you're vaccinated you're 8x less likely to get COVID, 25x less likely to be hospitalized with COVID, and 25x less likely to die from COVID than if you're unvaccinated.

- New data on Delta from CDC: While vaccination reduces one's chance of becoming infected with COVID-19, those who do become infected with the Delta variant despite being fully vaccinated are likely at risk of transmitting it to others. Vaccinated individuals who do become infected with the Delta variant have similar viral loads as unvaccinated individuals who become infected.

- Our best pathway out of this dangerous surge and pandemic is a one-two punch of masking and getting the vaccine.

1

- Universal masking has proven to be an effective strategy to reduce community spread of COVID-19. The temporary mask mandate will help limit suffering and death in our fourth and worst surge to date. It also is the least disruptive mitigation measure - it allows our children to go back to school in-person and our economy to stay open.

- The vaccine is free and available at over 1,400 locations across the state. For vaccine information, to speak directly with a medical professional, or to schedule an appointment with a local provider, call 1-855-453-0774. (NOTE: this is the best number to include in your communications).

- Unvaccinated people with "natural immunity" who have been infected with COVID in the past should not rely on prior infection to protect against the Delta variant, according to experts who study the variants. "This virus can get past the defenses that our bodies made against earlier pandemic viruses," said Jeremy Kamil, a virologist who has been sequencing variants at LSU Health Shreveport.

- A bright spot in all this darkness is that people in Louisiana are clearly feeling the urgency. In the past two weeks our vaccination rate has jumped significantly, testing demand is up statewide, and calls to our vaccine hotline and 211 have doubled.

STATEWIDE MASK MANDATE

Face masks that properly cover the wearer's mouth and nose should be worn indoors at all times, unless a person is in a residence, under the Governor's statewide mask mandate, which will be in place until at least September 1.

The order requires face coverings for everyone age 5 or older or enrolled in kindergarten, except for the following:

- Anyone who has a medical condition that prevents the wearing of a face covering
- Anyone who is consuming a drink or food
- Anyone who is trying to communicate with a person who is hearing impaired
- Anyone who is giving a speech for broadcast or to an audience
- Anyone temporarily removing his or her face covering for identification purposes

As with the Governor's previous mandate, children younger than kindergarten age are exempted if they cannot wear a mask. However, the CDC and the Louisiana Department of Health strongly encourages indoor mask wearing in public for all children ages 2 and older as tolerated, especially as they are not yet eligible for the COVID vaccine.

LDH shares these general reminders for individuals and families who are trying to stay as safe as possible during the pandemic:

1. If you can do an activity outdoors instead of indoors, do it outdoors
2. Follow good hygiene practices (wash your hands vigorously and frequently, and don't touch your face)
3. Stay away from crowded settings
4. Work remotely if possible

5. If you suspect you have been exposed to COVID-19, get tested immediately
6. If you're in an at-risk group, be extra careful

GUIDANCE FOR LARGE GATHERINGS

The Louisiana Department of Health additionally issued guidance to the public about large event gatherings during the fourth surge of COVID-19 in Louisiana, including ways to lower risk for both vaccinated and unvaccinated people.

LDH recommends:

- Limiting the size of indoor gatherings, moving events outdoors, or hosting meetings and events virtually to reduce the likelihood of COVID-19 spread.
- All participants of indoor meetings and events are required to be masked.
- People with underlying health conditions that make them more likely to have severe COVID complications should avoid nonessential trips outside of the home.
- Event hosts and facilities should practice strong sanitation and hygiene practices and provide hand sanitizer for those who need it.
- Spaces should be staged to accommodate at least six feet of distance between guests.

TESTING AND QUARANTINE GUIDANCE

Under guidance issued by LDH two weeks ago, all people should take a COVID test immediately after a known or suspected exposure to COVID-19 and take the following actions:

- If positive, they should isolate immediately.
- If negative, they should retest again between five and seven days post-exposure.
- If they develop symptoms of COVID-19 at any point they should test and immediately isolate pending the results.

Call 211 to find a COVID-19 testing site near you.

This guidance will remain in place at least until Louisiana is safely out of its fourth COVID-19 surge, with additional guidance and mitigation measures put in place if and when necessary to slow the spread of the more contagious and virulent Delta variant and preserve hospital capacity.

At this time, the CDC advises that fully vaccinated individuals who are not experiencing COVID symptoms do not need to quarantine following an exposure to COVID-19, and LDH is not yet altering this guidance.

Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19, even those who are fully vaccinated or without a known exposure, should get tested.

Anyone who tests positive should immediately isolate. Isolation (for those who test positive for COVID-19) typically consists of:

- If symptomatic, at least 10 days since symptoms first appeared, symptoms are improving, and at least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication
- If asymptomatic but with a positive test, 10 days from the time the test sample was collected

HOW TO GET A COVID VACCINE IN LOUISIANA

Everyone aged 12 and older is eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine in Louisiana. The FDA has only authorized one of the three COVID-19 vaccines – from Pfizer – for children ages 12 to 17. Parents should confirm with the vaccine provider that their child is under 18 to ensure Pfizer vaccine is available before making an appointment.

- COVID-19 vaccines are free and widely available at more than 1,400 locations in all of Louisiana's 64 parishes, including at pharmacies, hospitals, health care clinics, and doctor's offices.
- For a list of locations, visit LDH's vaccine directory which can be found at covidvaccine.la.gov or visit vaccines.gov, which is maintained by the federal government.
- To get a list of vaccine locations near you, text your ZIP code to GETVAX (438829) in English, or VACUNA (822862) in Spanish.
- If you have questions, would like to speak with a medical professional, or need help scheduling an appointment, call 211 or Louisiana's vaccine hotline at 1-855-453-0774.

SUGGESTED ACCOUNTS & LINKS
To amplify the content about the Delta variant, we suggest engaging with the following accounts and including one of the following links in content:

Bring Back Louisiana #SleevesUp Campaign Accounts ● Facebook: @BringBackLASleevesUp ● Twitter: @SleevesUpLA ● Instagram: @SleevesUpLA *Louisiana Department of Health Accounts* ● Facebook: @LADeptHealth ● Twitter: @LADeptHealth ● Instagram: @ladepthealth	*Links/Calls to Action* ● To get more info on where to get the vaccine: covidvaccine.la.gov ● Call 211 or Louisiana's vaccine hotline at 1-855-453-0774.

SUGGESTED HASHTAGS
Including additional hashtags in your social content will help with the reach of the campaign to relevant audiences.
- #SleevesUp
- #BringBackLA
- #Let'sEndIt

SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

LINK TO VARIOUS SIZE GRAPHICS FOR DOWNLOAD HERE.

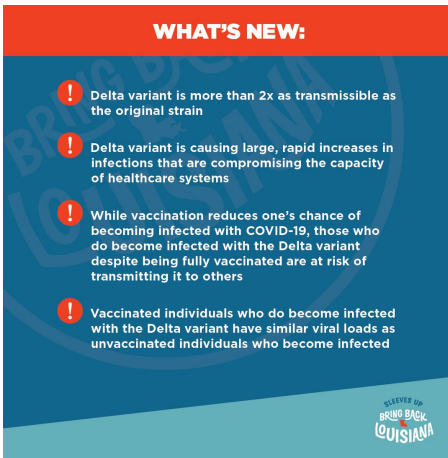LINK TO VIDEO FROM MASK MANDATE PRESS CONFERENCE FOR POSTING HERE AND HERE.

LINK TO 30-SECOND COMMERCIAL FOR SHARING HERE.

LINK TO FACT SHEET ON THE MASK MANDATE GUIDANCE DOWNLOAD HERE.

LINK TO PRINTABLE SIGN ("THANK YOU FOR WEARING A MASK") FOR YOUR BUSINESS DOWNLOAD HERE.

Social Media Channel	Messaging	Image
[Facebook] [Instagram] [Twitter]	Over time, viruses like COVID-19 mutate and can get more contagious and more severe. The Delta variant is the most transmissible variant yet. It's faster, fitter, and it's now the dominant COVID strain in the country and Louisiana.	**FAQ** **WHY IS THE DELTA VARIANT MORE DANGEROUS THEN THE OTHERS?** SLEEVES UP BRING BACK LOUISIANA
[Facebook] [Instagram] [Twitter]	The Delta variant is 2x more contagious than the original strains of COVID-19 and is affecting our young, healthy neighbors and children. With school starting up again soon, we have to take action now. Getting the COVID-19 vaccine & masking up are the best way to protect yourself and your loved ones.	**FAQ** **WHY ARE PEOPLE WORRIED ABOUT THE DELTA VARIANT?** SLEEVES UP BRING BACK LOUISIANA

Social Media Channel	Messaging	Image
Facebook, Instagram, Twitter	The COVID vaccines offer very good protection against the Delta variant, but vaccinated folks are likely able to pass the virus to vulnerable groups and those who are unvaccinated, including children. Regardless of your vaccination status, you should still #MaskUp indoors and if you're around folks that are not members of your household. Let's take action to slow the spread now, before it's too late.	**FAQ** **IF I AM VACCINATED, DO I NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THE DELTA VARIANT?** SLEEVES UP BRING BACK LOUISIANA
Facebook, Instagram, Twitter	Here are the FACTS about the highly contagious Delta variant. This variant is much more contagious, and it is spreading fast. The vaccines work against variants, are very EASY to find and are FREE across LA. Call our hotline at 1-855-453-0774 or go to covidvaccine.la.gov.	**WHAT'S NEW:** ! Delta variant is more than 2x as transmissible as the original strain ! Delta variant is causing large, rapid increases in infections that are compromising the capacity of healthcare systems ! While vaccination reduces one's chance of becoming infected with COVID-19, those who do become infected with the Delta variant despite being fully vaccinated are at risk of transmitting it to others ! Vaccinated individuals who do become infected with the Delta variant have similar viral loads as unvaccinated individuals who become infected SLEEVES UP BRING BACK LOUISIANA

[Facebook] [Instagram] [Twitter]	COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations are surging in Louisiana. Masking + vaccines will help limit suffering and death and get us out of this fourth wave and end the pandemic. Not yet vaccinated? Get the facts & schedule your vaccine appointment today by calling 855-453-0774	
[Facebook] [Instagram] [Twitter]	With this new surge caused by the Delta variant, we must go back to basics to protect ourselves & our loved ones: ➡#MaskUp indoors, no matter your vaccination status ➡Businesses should take precautions to reduce transmission among employees ➡Continue to get tested if you believe you've been exposed, and isolate if you test positive Most importantly--get your vaccine. It's the BEST way to protect yourself & loved ones. Make your appointment today by calling 855-453-0774.	

[Facebook] [Instagram] [Twitter]	We are confident that #COVID-19 vaccines will be critical to ultimately ending the pandemic. But we must also go back to #COVID basics. #LetsEndIt #BringBackLouisiana Get the facts at covidvaccine.la.gov.	**HOW TO STAY SAFE DURING COVID PANDEMIC:** (!) If you can do an activity outdoors instead of indoors, do it outdoors (!) Follow good hygiene practices (!) Stay away from crowded settings (!) Work virtually if possible (!) If you suspect you have been exposed to COVID-19, get tested immediately (!) If you're in an at-risk group, be extra careful SLEEVES UP BRING BACK LOUISIANA
[Facebook] [Instagram] [Twitter]	The Delta variant surge can be slowed through #masking, #testing and #vaccines. This masking and testing guidance will remain in place until Louisiana is safely out of its fourth #COVID-19 surge, with additional guidance and mitigation measures put in place if and when necessary to slow the spread #MaskUp #SleevesUp	**TESTING AND QUARANTINE GUIDANCE** All people should take a COVID test immediately after a known or suspected exposure to COVID-19 and take the following actions: • **If positive,** they should isolate immediately. • **If negative,** they should retest again between five and seven days post-exposure. • If they develop symptoms of COVID-19 at any point they should test and immediately isolate pending the results. BRING BACK LOUISIANA

	#Louisiana, thank you for wearing a mask! Let's all do our part to #BringBackLouisiana. Visit **covidvaccine.la.gov** to learn more about the temporary mask mandate and to schedule your FREE, SAFE, and EASY COVID-19 vaccine NOW!	