

PFT COVID Update 12-15-21: Grim Milestone - Variants - PA Challenges - Links

CORONAVIRUS



Updates

The Realities of a Sobering New Milestone.

American COVID-19 Related Deaths Top 800,000

Preventable.

That's the word that stands out in the simple analytical article from AP that follows. It is a word to keep in mind each day as the Covid-19 Delta variant rages on and the Omicron variant emerges across our nation. *Preventable.*

Click to read the article: [US COVID death toll hits 800,000, a year into vaccine drive.](#)

Across the state and across the country, mask mandates are being lifted or altered. Distancing measures are being debated and changed. Perhaps the greatest indicator of our collective pandemic failure is our nation not reaching the target of 70-75% full vaccinations—a goal set for July of 2021 that has long since come and gone.

Currently 200 million Americans are fully vaccinated, just over 60% of the population.

Almost all the people dying are now dying preventable deaths. And that's because they're not immunized. And you know that, God, it's a terrible tragedy."

— Dr. Chris Beyrer, Epidemiologist
Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

The articles and references in the rest of this letter should help clarify some of the disinformation that is out there. The pressing need remains, however, for the nation to have as many fully vaccinated and fully eligible vaccine-boosted individuals as possible.

We are not there yet.

To find a COVID-19 vaccine, use the [federal government's online tool](#), call [1-800-232-0233](tel:1-800-232-0233) for multilingual support, or text your zip code to 438829 (GETVAX).

Delta-Omicron Variant Tag Team Makes Booster Doses Essential.

While the headline says it all, please take a moment to [click and read this general information article from the](#) AMA regarding:

- How each variant “works.”
 - How dominance and transmissibility may change for each variant.
 - Why full-dose vaccinations and boosters-when-eligible are critical.
 - What to look for (and wait for) when seeking answers about evading immunity.
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Pennsylvania-Specific Challenges Outlined In Several References.

[According to USAFACTS.org](#), in Pennsylvania, 10,501,070 people (82% of the state) has received at least one dose while overall, 7,513,481 people (58% of Pennsylvania's population) have been fully vaccinated.

Our “at least one dose” results to date are solid, however we’ve got a ways to go for our population to achieve the 70-75% full vaccination necessary to help beat back the virus.

The above reality, coupled with the [State Supreme Court striking down the statewide mask mandate](#), has created additional challenges for municipalities across Pennsylvania. School districts and local officials across the Commonwealth are now debating and sometimes changing or altering mask mandates—a series of moves with potentially unpredictable outcomes.

[Read how a number of localities and school districts have responded to recent developments by clicking here.](#)

(Note: Governor Tom Wolf has already announced his intention to [return PA's K-12 school mask requirement](#) to local leaders on January 17, 2022.)

Information Links That Bear Repeating:

Below please find additional links providing helpful information you can bookmark and count on as the COVID-19 situation changes and evolves.

[AFT/AFTPA Coronavirus Resources & Updates for Members](#)

[Find a Vaccine Provider Near You](#)

[AFT/PFT Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#)

-- A Negotiated, Free Benefit to Members

[Click for EAP Information Flyer](#) (includes login info)

[Click for Life Skills Solutions Website](#) (login upper right)

[AFT Share My Lesson Stress Management Resources](#) (searchable)

[Download the PA COVID-Alert Tracking App](#)

[National Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) Coronavirus Resources](#)

[CDC Data Tracking Page](#)

[CDC Vaccine Information Landing Page](#)

[PPS Coronavirus Resources and Links](#)

[PA Department of Health Coronavirus Resources](#)

[PA-Specific Resources from Senator Casey](#)

[Student Debt Relief Resources](#)

[Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\) Rumor Control](#)

[Coronavirus Testing Locations \(view interactive map mid page\)](#)



Coronavirus Self-Checker

A guide to help you make decisions and seek appropriate medical care

**** PFT Coronavirus Updates Released Periodically As Needed ****

Missed an update or message? [View our archive of COVID-19 Updates here](#).

Please keep in touch—keep sharing your ideas, your questions and your concerns.

In solidarity—

Dan Evans

PFT Communications Director