

Minnesota Vaccine Ambassadors to Encourage COVID-19 Vaccinations

Today, Governor Tim Walz announced the State of Minnesota is partnering with leaders representing all aspects of Minnesota life – including the arts, business and civic community, sports, and elected officials – to spread the word about the importance of getting vaccinated against COVID-19. In the state’s continued efforts to meet Minnesotans where they are and get them the information they need to decide to get vaccinated, this initial roster of leaders will engage directly with Minnesotans all across the state, highlighting the benefits of getting vaccinated to each individual and their community.

“At this stage of our vaccination efforts, every conversation counts — every person who turns out to get their shot is critical to reaching that level of broad community protection we need to keep Minnesotans safe as we get back to normal,” said Governor Walz. **“These Minnesota leaders recognize the importance of vaccines and are providing a great service to our state that will help put the pandemic behind us.”**

“We know there is no greater organizing power in our communities than Minnesotans talking to Minnesotans,” said Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan. **“I am so grateful to these incredible Minnesotans — from civil rights leaders, to artists, to CEOs — for using their voices and platforms to advocate for getting vaccinated and helping end this pandemic.”**

Local leaders participating include:

- Pat Baustian, Mayor of Luverne
- Ben Schierer, Mayor of Fergus Falls
- Dessa, Singer, rapper, and writer
- PJ Fleck, Head Football Coach at University of Minnesota
- Beth Ford, President and CEO of Land O’Lakes
- Dr. Daniel Grossman, CMO of Best Buy and Emergency Medicine Physician
- Dr. Josie Johnson, civil rights activist
- Ben Schierer, Mayor of Fergus Falls
- Lindsay Whalen, Head Women's Basketball Coach at University of Minnesota

These leaders will highlight the importance of getting vaccinated and reach out to Minnesotans in a variety of ways, including text, call, and email messages.

“I, my family and our community have deeply felt the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic over the last 16 months,” said Mayor of Luverne Pat Baustian. **“We don’t need to go through another year of lives lost, schools disrupted, jobs lost, economic impact, and meat packing plant shutdowns. Getting vaccinated is how we take care of one another and ensure the long-term stability and health of our communities.”**

"As a parent, business owner, and mayor I see every day the physical, social, economic, benefits of our communities getting back together and getting vaccinated is the best way to that," said Mayor of Fergus Falls Ben Schierer. **"It felt good for me to do my small part to help end this pandemic. Let's do this together."**

"Never been more excited to rock a Band-Aid," said singer, rapper and writer Dessa. **"Every vaccine administered brings us one step closer to being together again: to hugging friends, eating with the whole family, and — of course — live music. Thanks to everybody who's rolled up a sleeve (and the health care workers doling out the Band-Aids)."**

"I know how difficult 2020 has been on all of us, and we're so close to getting to the finish line,"said Head Football Coach at University of Minnesota PJ Fleck. **"I know this as your head football coach, we can all do our part to end the pandemic and also fill TCF Bank Stadium the entire year. We're looking forward to our third straight home sellout if we can all do our part. What we're asking you to do is go get your vaccine. Let's make this an elite year."**

"COVID-19 disrupted many aspects of our life and work, but like true Minnesotans, we're working together to get back to normal," said President and CEO of Land O'Lakes Beth Ford. **"Our state has been among the nation-wide leaders in stepping up to protect ourselves, our families and our communities by getting vaccinated. We can't lose momentum now. Get your vaccine today so we can move beyond COVID-19, fully open Minnesota's economy and, most importantly, get back to enjoying the things we love most about our home state."**

"Getting the COVID-19 vaccination is the most impactful step a person can take to help return to normalcy," said Chief Medical Officer of Best Buy and Emergency Medicine Physician Dr. Daniel Grossman. **"We're incredibly fortunate to have COVID-19 vaccines available to us that have been proven to be both safe and effective. These vaccines went through rigorous scientific evaluation and approval processes. Take the time to get vaccinated so you can protect yourself and your family, friends, colleagues and community."**

"I really encourage everyone to get vaccinated and the faster we can all do that, the faster we can all gather around each other as Minnesotans," said Head Women's Basketball Coach at University of Minnesota Lindsay Whalen. **"I want to pack the barn next season and in order to do that we need to all get our vaccines."**

The state continues to encourage Minnesotans to get vaccinated. Minnesotans who receive their first dose between May 27-June 30 are eligible for a free reward through the 'Your Shot to Summer' campaign. All Minnesotans who have gotten at least one vaccine dose can get a free or discounted drink at establishments participating in the 'Cheers to the Vaccine' campaign.

Minnesota continues to make it easy for anyone who wants a shot to get one. Over the next two weeks, the state and its partners are hosting more than 120 community vaccination events. Walk-ins are accepted at all state COVID-19 Community Vaccination Program sites, including the two newest sites offering Johnson & Johnson to travelers and others at MSP International Airport. Minnesotans can find vaccine locations close to them by using the [Find Vaccine Locations map](#) .

Minnesotans are also able to secure free or discounted transportation to and from their vaccine appointment until July 4 through [Uber](#) and [Lyft](#).