

Incentives for COVID-19 Vaccination: Food, Cash, & Other Perks

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Published on June 24, 2021

Key takeaways:

- To boost vaccine rates, the U.S. government is offering incentives such as free childcare and rides to vaccination sites.
- States also are offering perks, ranging from million-dollar lotteries and scholarships to free food and drinks, and more.
- Private companies have also joined in with incentive programs for employees and customers alike, with options such as paid time off and sweepstakes. You may need to show your vaccine card to qualify.



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In an effort to get back to normal life, government officials and companies are offering lottery tickets, cash or free goodies to people who get their COVID-19 vaccines.

As of mid-June, about 53% of the U.S. adult population had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. But many people remain hesitant to get immunized, especially in the South. The Biden administration, states, and private employers are trying to boost the numbers by offering them incentives for getting the shot. Some incentives are tied to July 4th, and some last well into summer.

Companies are offering customers and employees discounts and cash rewards for getting their vaccines. Mayors and governors across the country are joining in with incentives such as:

- Lottery tickets
- Free food and drinks
- Free fishing and hunting licenses

Here's what you should know about vaccine incentives if you haven't had your shot yet.

What is Joe Biden offering?

President Biden has negotiated deals to offer free childcare while parents are getting a vaccine or recovering from vaccination. He has struck agreements with four childcare facilities. Contact the company or your local YMCA for details and to check availability:

- Bright Horizons
- KinderCare
- LearningCare Group
- YMCA

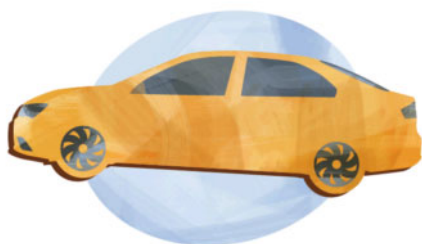
Biden announced rideshare apps Lyft and Uber are offering free rides to vaccine appointments. Other companies also are offering discounts and rewards to customers who can show they've been vaccinated.

The goal of Biden's "national month of action" was to get 70% of Americans over 12 at least partially vaccinated by July 4. But the administration recently projected that the U.S. will fall just shy of that target because of several factors, including reluctance among young people ages 18 to 26 to get the shot. The 70% goal may be based on herd immunity — the idea that if a large segment of the population has immunity, there is greater protection against the virus.

In general, the more contagious the virus or disease, the higher the percentage of people who need to be vaccinated (threshold). It's important to understand, however, that there isn't consensus on the exact threshold that would be needed to provide herd immunity against the coronavirus. For context, measles requires a 95% vaccination rate to reach herd immunity, while polio reaches it at 80%, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Both diseases are highly contagious.

Even though there isn't a known threshold for COVID-19, the 70% goal is still important: The more people who are vaccinated, the more protected the population will be.

U.S. Government Vaccine Incentives



FREE RIDES
To Vaccination Sites



FREE CHILDCARE
While Parents
Get Vaccinated

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Which states are offering incentives for getting vaccinated?

As of mid-June, 22 states and the District of Columbia are offering some form of incentive to encourage people to get vaccinated:

- Alaska
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Kansas
- Kentucky
- Louisiana

- Maine
- Maryland
- Minnesota
- New Jersey
- New Mexico
- New York
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Oregon
- Vermont
- Washington
- West Virginia

Within the remaining 28 states that aren't on the above list, there may be cities, counties, or local businesses that are offering incentives.

Rewards vary widely, and some states are getting creative with their incentives. Depending on where you live, there could be anything from a million-dollar cash prize to a custom hunting rifle on the table. Because the vaccine is already free— regardless of health insurance or immigration status— these incentives are a bonus to being able to safely navigate public life.

What are the incentives being offered?

Lotteries

Vaccine lotteries may get a lot of coverage, but only 10 states are offering these kinds of prizes:

State	Lottery Prizes
California	10 winners: \$1.5 million each 30 winners: \$50,000 Two million winners: \$50 cards
Colorado	Five winners: \$1 million
Kentucky	Three winners: \$1 million
Maryland	One winner: \$400,000 40 winners: \$40,000
New Mexico	One winner: \$5 million 20 winners: \$250,000
North Carolina	Four winners: \$1 million
Ohio	Five winners: \$1 million
Oregon	One winner: \$1 million 36 winners: \$10,000 winners
Washington	One winner: \$1 million prize Four winners: \$250,000
West Virginia	One winner: \$1.588 million One winner: \$588,000 Seven winners: \$1 million

For most of these lotteries you only have to receive your first vaccine shot to qualify. The only exception is New Mexico's lottery, where you have to be fully vaccinated to win the \$5 million grand prize. (Residents can still win the smaller prizes if they're between their first and second vaccine shots.)

Several of the states offering lotteries — including Colorado, Kentucky, Ohio, and Oregon — are also offering scholarship programs to state residents under 18 years old. Awards range from \$50,000 up to a four year, full-ride scholarship. All four scholarship programs can be won by those who are at least partially vaccinated. Check with each state for details.

Free ride sharing

Rideshare apps Lyft and Uber are both offering rewards for those using their services to get to vaccination centers. Both limit free rides to standard pharmacy operating hours: 6am to 8pm.

Here's what else you should know about each option:

Lyft

Lyft's vaccine access program is part of the company's goal to give 60 million rides to and from vaccination sites to those in need. It provides ride codes, worth up to \$15 each way (excluding tips), for a maximum of two rides. So if you require two round trips, one of those would have to come out of pocket. The program applies to Lyft rideshare, bike, or scooter rides.

Riders should be aware, however, that the ride codes apply to your next two rides — you have to use it for your first vaccination appointment to take advantage of it. And you'd have to avoid other Lyft trips (or take non-qualifying trips) between vaccinations to avoid using up the code prematurely.

Uber

Uber's program is part of its pledge to give 10 million free and discounted vaccine rides. It provides up to \$25 each way, capped at four rides. To qualify, the two round trips must be three weeks apart. This might be a better option for those who require two vaccine appointments. However, this program is limited to UberX and Uber WAV rides, and the offer ends on July 4th, 2021.

Dating apps

In an attempt to make vaccinations more alluring and normalized in the dating world, dating apps are offering users access to premium content, like profile boosts and "super likes," — which allow you to highlight your interest to potential matches—in exchange for sharing their vaccination status. The companies offering higher visibility to members who mention their vaccination status are:

- BLK
- Bumble
- Chispa
- Hinge

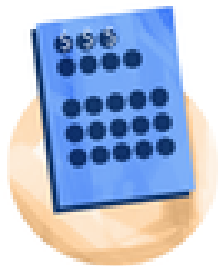
- Match
- Tinder

Food and drinks

Food and beverages are another common incentive. Companies, cities, and states alike are turning to them to help boost vaccination rates. Unlike dating app incentives, however, proof is usually required for these kinds of offers — either by showing your vaccine card or being at a vaccination site.

For example, Kripsy Kreme is offering a free glazed donut to anyone who shows their COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card at participating U.S. locations. New York City is offering vouchers to Shake Shack for those who get vaccinated at one of the city's mobile vaccine buses. Meanwhile, more than 70 McDonald's locations in California are offering a coupon for one free menu item to those who get vaccinated at one of their pop-up clinics. And the Indiana Department of Health partnered with the Girl Scouts of America to offer free cookies at select vaccination clinics around the state.

State Government Vaccine Incentives



**MILLION DOLLAR
LOTTERIES**



SCHOLARSHIPS



**FREE
FOOD & DRINKS**

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Employee perks

Companies looking to increase vaccination rates within their own ranks are turning to two common incentive options: paid time off to get the vaccine, or cash rewards to those who get their shots.

Paid time off

Companies offering paid time off sometimes place limits on the amount of hours an employee will be paid to go get vaccinated. In general, that ranges from two to six hours, though there are some exceptions. And it's worth noting that some companies are offering paid time off alongside other options, like cash rewards or raffles.

Here are some of the companies offering paid time off to their workers so they can get vaccinated:

Company	Vaccine Paid Time Off Details
Amtrak	2 hours
Aldi	4 hours
Chobani	6 hours
JPMorgan Chase	8 hours
United Airlines	13 hours

Cash

Monetary rewards are another route for companies looking to boost vaccination rates within their employee ranks. These range from \$25 to \$500, depending on the company, and can be outright cash offers, as well as cash-equivalent offers:

Company	Reward
Albertsons	\$100 to associates
Amazon	\$80 to front-line employees
American Airlines	\$50 worth of points in the company's recognition platform
Anthem	Credit toward medical premiums
AutoZone	\$100
Bolthouse Farms	\$500
BRIA Health Services	\$150

Company	Reward
Bridgestone	\$100
Instacart	\$25 to shoppers
JBS USA and Pilgrim's	\$100
Kroger	\$100
Lidl	\$200
MetLife	\$100
Petco Health and Wellness Company	\$75
Publix	\$125 gift cards
Shipt	\$50 to shoppers
Tractor Supply Co	\$50
Walmart	\$75

While some companies are offering rewards, others are taking things a step further by making vaccination for employees mandatory. Delta, and United, for example, are both requiring new employees to get their shots.

But not everyone agrees with this tactic. In March, Houston Methodist offered its employees a \$500 incentive for getting a COVID-19 vaccine. In May, a group of more than 150 workers sued the hospital after it made COVID-19 vaccination mandatory. A judge recently ruled in favor of the hospital and dismissed the lawsuit.

Company perks for customers

In addition to employee perks, some companies are also offering customers the chance to cash in on their vaccinations. These offers typically translate to saved money, sweepstakes entries, and free stuff provided in exchange for those who get vaccinated at their location and/or show proof they have been vaccinated.

For instance, Albertsons, Carrs, Jewel-Osco, Pavilions, Randalls, and Safeway (among others) are offering a 10% discount on purchases for those who get vaccinated at one of their locations. United Airlines' "Your Shot to Fly" sweepstakes is giving MileagePlus members the chance to win either a roundtrip flight for two or free flights for a year to any of

the airline's destinations when they upload their vaccination card to their account. Major League Baseball is also pitching in, as its 30 clubs are each offering at least one vaccination event where fans can get free game tickets.

Private Companies Vaccine Incentives



PAID TIME OFF



**CASH &
SWEEPSTAKES**



DONUTS

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**May need to show vaccine card to qualify*

What else are state and local governments offering?

While only a fifth of states are offering lotteries, many more states and local governments are offering other vaccine incentives.

Arkansas, for example, is offering \$21 worth of gift certificates with the state Game and Fishing Commission. In Talladega, Alabama, the local superspeedway offered those who either got tested for COVID or vaccinated the chance to drive around the track. In Maine, residents who get their vaccine can score prizes like a hunting or fishing license, an L.L. Bean gift card, or a state park day pass. And West Virginia—which is also offering a lottery—is giving out prizes like custom hunting rifles and shotguns.

But perhaps the most unusual incentive comes from Washington state, where the Liquor and Cannabis Board has granted a temporary allowance to state-licensed cannabis retailers to give one marijuana joint to adult consumers who receive a vaccination at an in-store vaccination clinic.

Where can I find a place to get vaccinated near me?

The CDC's vaccine finder is an excellent resource to find a vaccine appointment near you. It allows you to search by vaccine brand as well as location. There are several places you can go to get your vaccine:

- Retail pharmacies such as CVS, Walgreens, or grocery store pharmacies
- Community health centers
- Mobile vaccination clinics

In many states, the vaccination rate has declined, leaving more appointments available and even allowing for walk-ins. The CDC recommends getting whichever vaccine is available to you rather than waiting for a specific brand, and does not recommend any one brand over the others.

The bottom line

As COVID-19 vaccinations slow nationwide, those 12 years old and older who haven't yet gotten their shot can take advantage of a growing number of incentives. The offerings range from lottery entries and cash to free food and childcare. States, cities, and employers are handing out creative freebies in an effort to raise vaccination rates. Increasing the number of vaccinated people in America can help create a safer environment for all.

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