

Safest States During COVID-19



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As the U.S. continues its efforts to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic and prepares for a potential winter surge, staying safe is one of Americans' top concerns. Safety is also essential for getting the economy back on track, as the lower COVID-19 transmission and deaths are in a state, the fewer restrictions there will be and the more confidence people will have to shop in person. While the country has mostly reopened, we'll only be able to completely get back to life as normal once most of the population is fully vaccinated against coronavirus. The good news is that the U.S. is picking up speed with vaccination, as around **61%** of the population has been fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as of December 14.

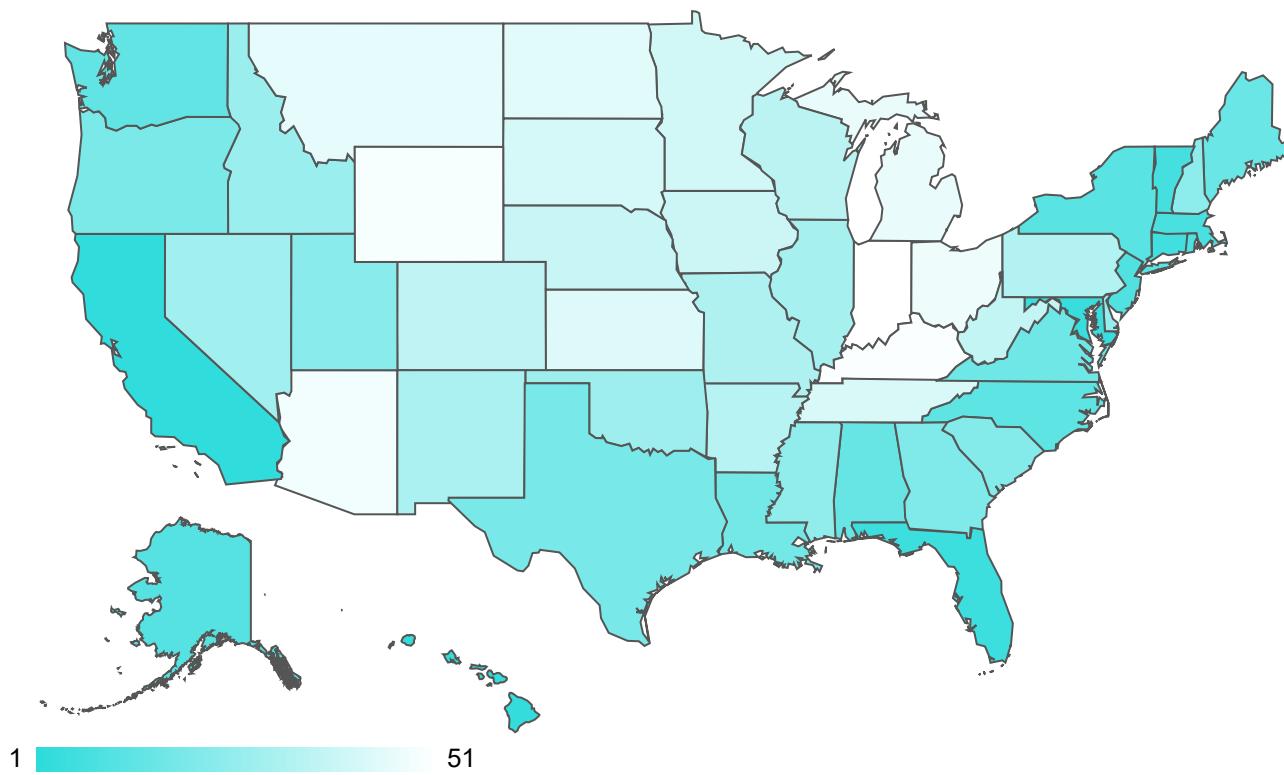
Some states are already safer than others, though, based on how well they have kept the pandemic under control and how much they are vaccinating. In order to find out the safest states during the COVID-19 pandemic, WalletHub compared the 50 states and the District of Columbia across five key metrics. Our data set includes the rates of COVID-19 transmission, positive testing, hospitalizations and death, as well as the share of the eligible population getting vaccinated.

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Main Findings



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Safest States During COVID

Overall Rank* ♦	State	Total Score ♦
1	District of Columbia	85.52
2	California	81.02
3	Hawaii	80.96
4	Maryland**	80.04
5	Florida	79.35
6	Connecticut	73.60
7	Vermont	73.35



Overall Rank* ♦	State	Total Score ♦
10	New Jersey	71.16
11	Alaska	69.58
12	New York	69.56
13	North Carolina	68.33
14	Washington	67.46
15	Alabama	65.26
16	Maine	64.77
17	Virginia	64.37
18	Louisiana	62.43
19	Texas	61.58
20	Oregon	58.05
21	Georgia	57.93
22	South Carolina	57.39
23	Utah	56.14
24	New Hampshire	55.98
25	Mississippi	55.19
26	Delaware	55.11
27	Idaho***	53.89
28	Oklahoma	52.73
29	Nevada	51.71



Overall Rank* ♦

New Mexico

Total Score ♦

32	Missouri	44.73
33	Pennsylvania	44.16
34	Arkansas	43.64
35	Wisconsin	42.00
36	Colorado	40.48
37	West Virginia	40.19
38	Nebraska	39.09
39	Iowa	39.04
40	Minnesota	38.23
41	South Dakota	37.82
42	Tennessee	37.81
43	Kansas	36.52
44	North Dakota	33.69
45	Montana	28.70
46	Michigan	25.27
47	Ohio	24.61
48	Arizona	22.25
49	Wyoming	20.25
50	Kentucky	18.98
51	Indiana	17.67



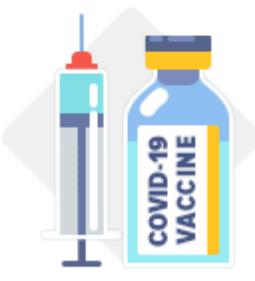
^{**}In early December 2021, CDC was informed of a temporary interruption in data submission from Maryland. Updates to Maryland's data for CDT maps and metrics will be made once data submission resumes.

***Idaho provides vaccine data only for vaccine recipients who are 18 years and older, in line with state laws. COVID-19 vaccination administration data is unavailable for the Vaccinations in the US and Vaccinations by County pages for the population aged less than 18 years. Since no individuals under 18 from Idaho are included in the vaccination totals, CDC is working to subtract Census figures for the Idaho population under the age of 18 from the total US and ID population denominators and from the US and ID populations denominators for people aged 12 years and older.

Rankings are based on data available as of 12:30 p.m. ET on Wednesday, December 15, 2021.

Highest Vaccination Rate

- T-1. Connecticut
- T-1. District of Columbia
- T-1. Hawaii
- T-1. Massachusetts
- T-1. New Hampshire
- T-1. Pennsylvania



Best State
vs
Worst State

Lowest Vaccination Rate

- 46. Tennessee
- 47. Louisiana
- 48. Indiana
- 49. Mississippi
- 50. Wyoming

2x Difference

Lowest Positive Testing Rate

- 1. Hawaii
- 2. District of Columbia
- 3. Louisiana
- 4. California
- 5. Florida



Best State
vs
Worst State

Highest Positive Testing Rate

- 47. Ohio
- 48. Nebraska
- T-49. Indiana
- T-49. Michigan
- 51. New Mexico

14x Difference

Lowest Hospitalization Rate

- 1. Hawaii



Highest Hospitalization Rate

- T-46. Arizona



4. Florida
5. California

Best State
vs
Worst State

20x Difference

T-46. Indiana
T-46. Ohio
T-46. Michigan

Lowest Death Rate

1. Alabama
2. Florida
3. District of Columbia
4. Alaska
5. Louisiana



Highest Death Rate

46. Montana
47. Arizona
48. West Virginia
- T-49. Kentucky
- T-49. Wyoming

Lowest Transmission Rate*

1. Maryland
2. Montana
3. Alaska
4. Wyoming
- T-5. Idaho
- T-5. North Dakota



Best State
vs
Worst State

14x Difference

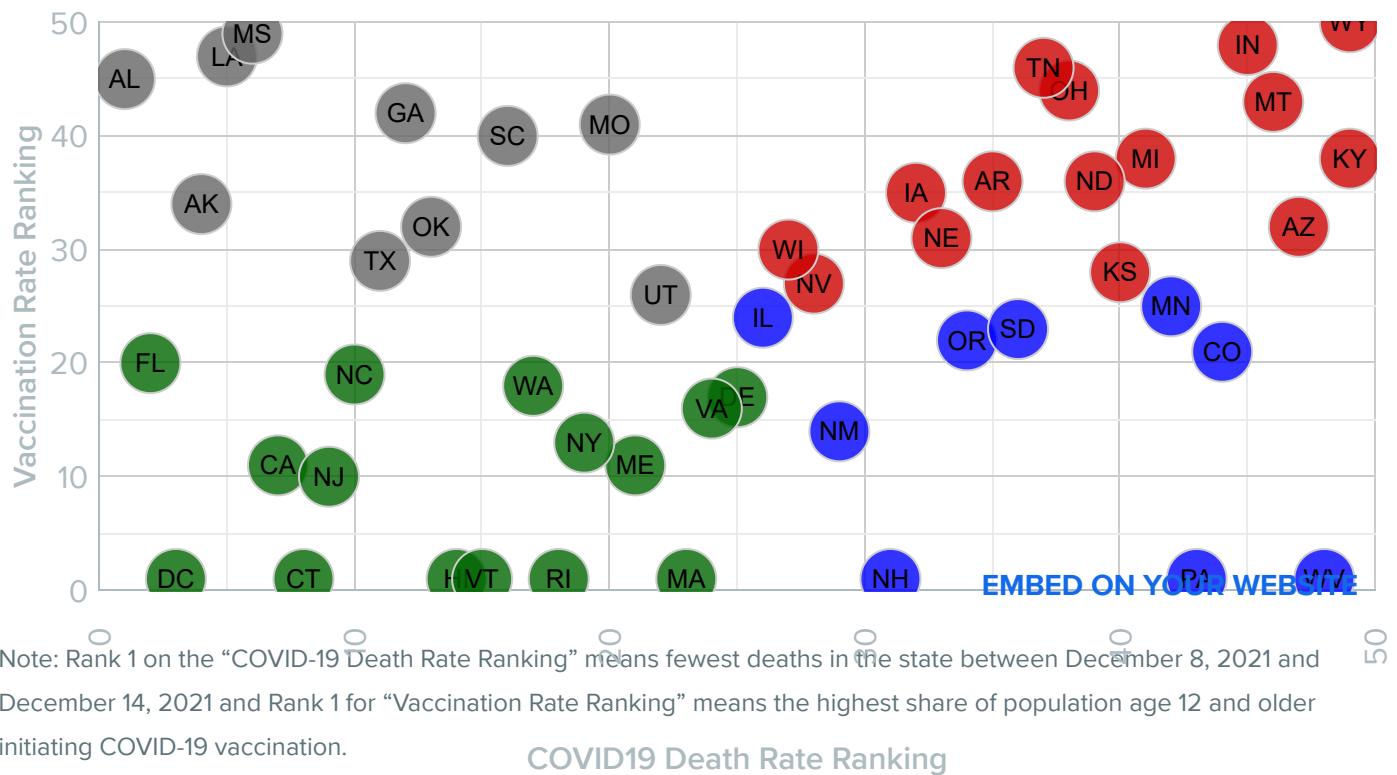
Highest Transmission Rate*

- T-45. Connecticut
- T-45. Hawaii
- T-45. New Jersey
- T-45. Rhode Island
- T-45. Texas
50. Illinois

**Estimates the average number of people to whom an infected person will transmit COVID-19.*

COVID-19 Death Rate Ranking vs. Vaccination Rate Ranking





Red States vs. Blue States

High COVID-19 Death Rate States | Low COVID-19 Death Rate States | High COVID-19 Vaccination Rate States | Low COVID-19 Vaccination Rate States

Ask the Experts

It's important for both ordinary people and government officials to work together to make sure their communities are safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. For further guidance, WalletHub turned to a panel of experts. Click on the pictures of the experts below to view their bios and responses to the following key questions:

1. What measures can people take to ensure the safety in their communities and contribute to the overall path to recovery in their state?
2. What role does the media play in educating the public when it comes to vaccination hesitancy?
3. How can the federal government help states increase vaccination rates?
4. Is the introduction of a 'No jab, No school' policy that requires mandatory vaccination at school entry necessary in the U.S.?



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Methodology

In order to identify the safest states during the COVID-19 pandemic, WalletHub compared the 50 states and the District of Columbia across five key metrics: 1) “Vaccination Rate,” 2) “Positive Testing Rate,” 3) “Hospitalization Rate,” 4) “Death Rate,” and 5) “Transmission Rate.”

These metrics are listed below with their corresponding weights. Each metric was graded on a 100-point scale, with a score of 100 representing the safest conditions.

We then determined the weighted average across all metrics to calculate an overall score for each state and used the resulting scores to rank-order the states.

- **Vaccination Rate: Double Weight (~25.00 Points)**

Note: This metric refers to the share of the population age 12 and older initiating vaccination as of December 14, 2021.

- **Positive Testing Rate: Full Weight (~12.50 Points)**

Note: This metric refers to the positive COVID-19 testing rate in the state between December 1, 2021 and December 7, 2021.

- **Hospitalization Rate: Full Weight (~12.50 Points)**

Note: This metric refers to the COVID-19 hospitalization rate in the state between December 2, 2021 and December 8, 2021.

- **Death Rate: Triple Weight (~37.50 Points)**

Note: This metric refers to the COVID-19 death rate in the state between December 8, 2021 and December 14, 2021.

- **Estimated Transmission Rate: Full Weight (~12.50 Points)**

Note: This metric refers to the current COVID-19 reproduction number, which is an estimate of the average number of people to whom an infected person will transmit the COVID-19 virus.

Sources: Data used to create this ranking were collected from the U.S. Census Bureau, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, COVID-19 Electronic Laboratory Reporting and epiforecasts.io.

Supporting Video & Audio Files:

- [YouTube \(for web embedding\)](#)
- [Raw video files \(for editing into clips\)](#)



Questions & Answers



Have a question? Ask the WalletHub community.

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0 **Why were the different factors used to calculate the overall score weighted?**

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