

News Brief

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President Biden Announces Plan to Combat COVID-19 in Winter Months

On Thursday, Dec. 2, 2021, President Joe Biden spoke at a press conference where he outlined a multiprong approach to combat COVID-19 this winter.

The plan is described as having the following goals:

- Drafting a rule that requires private insurers to reimburse the costs of at-home COVID-19 tests
- Getting the approximately 43 million vaccine holdouts vaccinated
- Providing booster shots to all eligible Americans
- Requiring incoming international travelers to test negative for COVID-19 within a day of traveling

“[The plan] doesn’t involve shutdowns or lockdowns, but widespread vaccinations, and boosters, and testing and a lot more.”

- Biden, during the press conference

Broadly, the plan will involve setting up more vaccination clinics, coordinating drivers to shuttle older Americans to vaccine sites and launching a media campaign to encourage more people to get their first vaccinations or boosters.

Notably, the White House has decided not to issue widespread travel restrictions or lockdowns, like other countries have done in the wake of the emerging coronavirus Omicron variant. Instead, Biden described his plan as one of “science and speed, not chaos and confusion.”

What’s Next?

Health experts anticipate a spike in COVID-19 infections this winter as more people gather indoors. The White House’s plan is to limit those spikes to the extent possible.

To the average American, free at-home testing is one of the most impactful takeaways from the plan. While the rule is still being drafted, it will reportedly compel private insurers to pay for at-home COVID-19 tests; however, further details are unknown.

Federal officials said more guidance regarding the free tests will be issued on Jan. 15, 2022.

Individuals should stay tuned for more details as this situation develops.

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