

# COVID-19 Breakthrough Report

Oregon's Weekly Surveillance Summary



## Breakthrough case report - November 18, 2021

### Background

Data for the weekly breakthrough case report will include data through the most recent Sunday and the report will be published on Thursdays.<sup>1</sup> Vaccine breakthrough cases are defined as instances in which an individual tests positive for COVID-19 at least 14 days following the completion of any COVID-19 vaccine series.<sup>2</sup> Vaccine breakthrough cases that result in hospitalization or death are reported to CDC.

This report includes only those vaccine breakthrough cases which are reported to public health following a positive test result. Many vaccine breakthrough cases are believed to experience no symptoms or minimal symptoms.<sup>3</sup> These cases are unlikely to undergo testing for COVID-19 and be reported to public health. Therefore, the true number of vaccine breakthrough cases is unknown.

### COVID-19 cases in vaccinated and unvaccinated people

#### Weekly summary

During the week of November 7–November 13, there were 5,924 cases of COVID-19. 4,416 (74.5%) were unvaccinated and 1,508 (25.5%) were vaccine breakthrough cases. The median age of breakthrough cases was 45 years. 40 (2.7%) breakthrough cases were residents of care facilities, senior living communities or other congregate living settings. 306 (20.3%) cases were 65 or older. There were 37 (2.5%) cases aged 12-17.

OHA publishes the most up-to-date information about cases from the most recently completed MMWR week. However, not all information about a case's vaccination status may be available at the

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<sup>1</sup> The weekly summary, Figure 1, and Figure 2 use the date that cases are reported to OHA, to provide information on the most recently identified cases. All other dates in this report use specimen collection date to align with the breakthrough case definition.

<sup>2</sup> This definition is consistent with the CDC's definition, available here: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/downloads/COVID-vaccine-breakthrough-case-investigations-Protocol.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Bergwerk, M., Gonen, T., Lustig, Y., Amit, S., Lipsitch, M., Cohen, C., Mandelboim, M., Gal Levin, E., Rubin, C., Indenbaum, V. and Tal, I., 2021. Covid-19 breakthrough infections in vaccinated health care workers. *New England Journal of Medicine*.

# COVID-19 Breakthrough Report

Oregon's Weekly Surveillance Summary



time of publication. Table 1 includes updated totals of COVID-19 cases by vaccine breakthrough status for the previous six weeks.

**Table 1. COVID-19 cases by vaccine breakthrough status over the previous 6 weeks**

MMWR week ending	Total cases	Breakthrough cases	Percent breakthrough case
2021-10-09	9,107	2,572	28.2
2021-10-16	8,401	2,242	26.7
2021-10-23	7,703	2,225	28.9
2021-10-30	8,227	2,341	28.5
2021-11-06	6,764	2,011	29.7
2021-11-13	5,924	1,508	25.5

## Cumulative summary

Overall, there have been 41,257 vaccine breakthrough cases identified in Oregon. The median age of breakthrough cases is 48 years (range: 11-106). 1,512 (3.7%) breakthrough cases were residents of care facilities, senior living communities or other congregate living settings. 9,959 (24.1%) cases were 65 or older. There have been a total of 1,125 (2.7%) cases aged 12-17. Breakthrough cases have been reported in all 36 counties.

Cases of COVID-19 are much more common in unvaccinated<sup>4</sup> individuals than in vaccinated individuals (Figure 1). The rate of COVID-19 cases among unvaccinated individuals in the most recent week was more than 4.5 times the rate of COVID-19 cases among those who are fully vaccinated. Community spread remains elevated throughout the state and is particularly high in areas with lower vaccination rates. As COVID-19 cases have increased across Oregon, vaccine breakthrough cases have also increased, but at a much lower rate than in the unvaccinated. Vaccination remains the most effective tool to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

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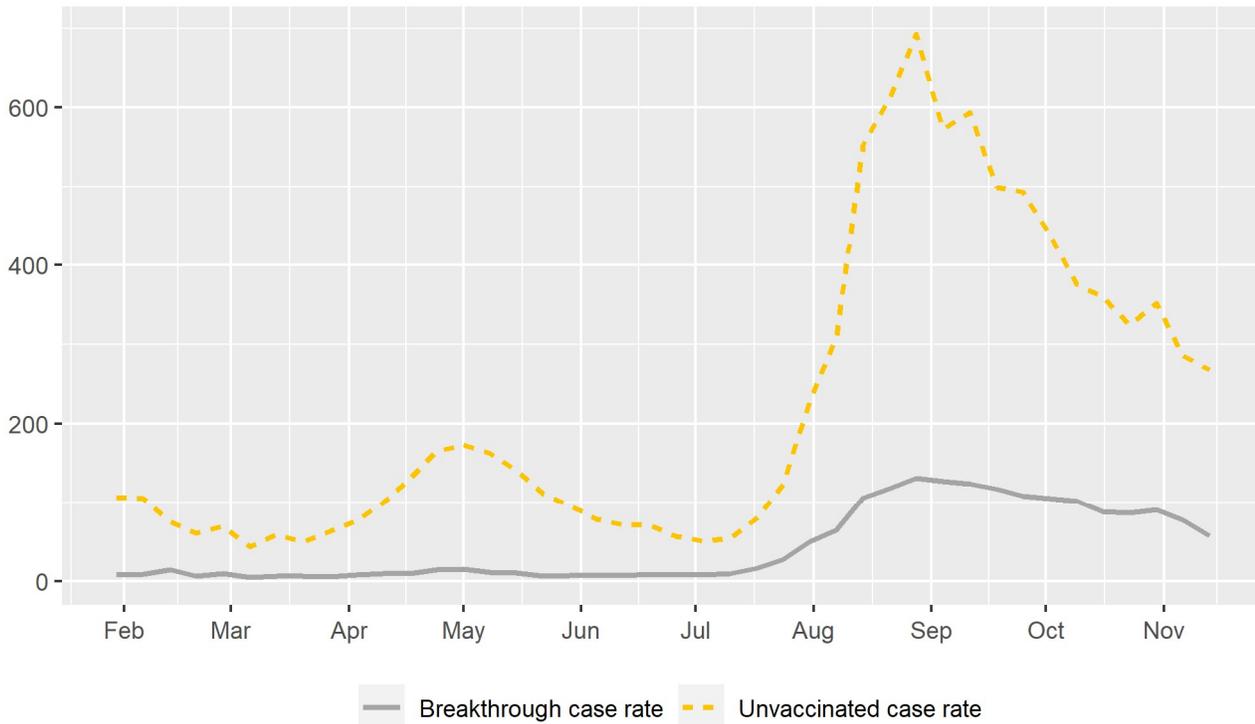
<sup>4</sup> Unvaccinated persons are defined as people who have not received an approved COVID-19 vaccine, or who have not completed a COVID-19 vaccine series.

# COVID-19 Breakthrough Report

Oregon's Weekly Surveillance Summary



Figure 1. COVID-19 cases per 100,000 per week, by vaccination status



## Vaccine breakthrough cases and severity

The Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccines are all highly effective at preventing severe COVID-19 illness and death. Table 2 includes totals of breakthrough cases by vaccine manufacturer and severity. Relatively few breakthrough cases have been hospitalized, and even fewer have died (Figure 2).<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> A death is considered to be related to COVID-19 in any of the following circumstances: a) death of a confirmed or probable COVID-19 case within 60 days of the earliest available date among exposure to a confirmed case, onset of symptoms, or date of specimen collection for the first positive test; b) death from any cause in a hospitalized person during admission or in the 60 days following discharge AND a COVID-19-positive laboratory diagnostic test at any time since 14 days prior to hospitalization; or c) death of someone with a COVID-19-specific ICD-10 code listed as a primary or contributing cause of death on a death certificate, regardless of the dates of diagnosis or death

# COVID-19 Breakthrough Report

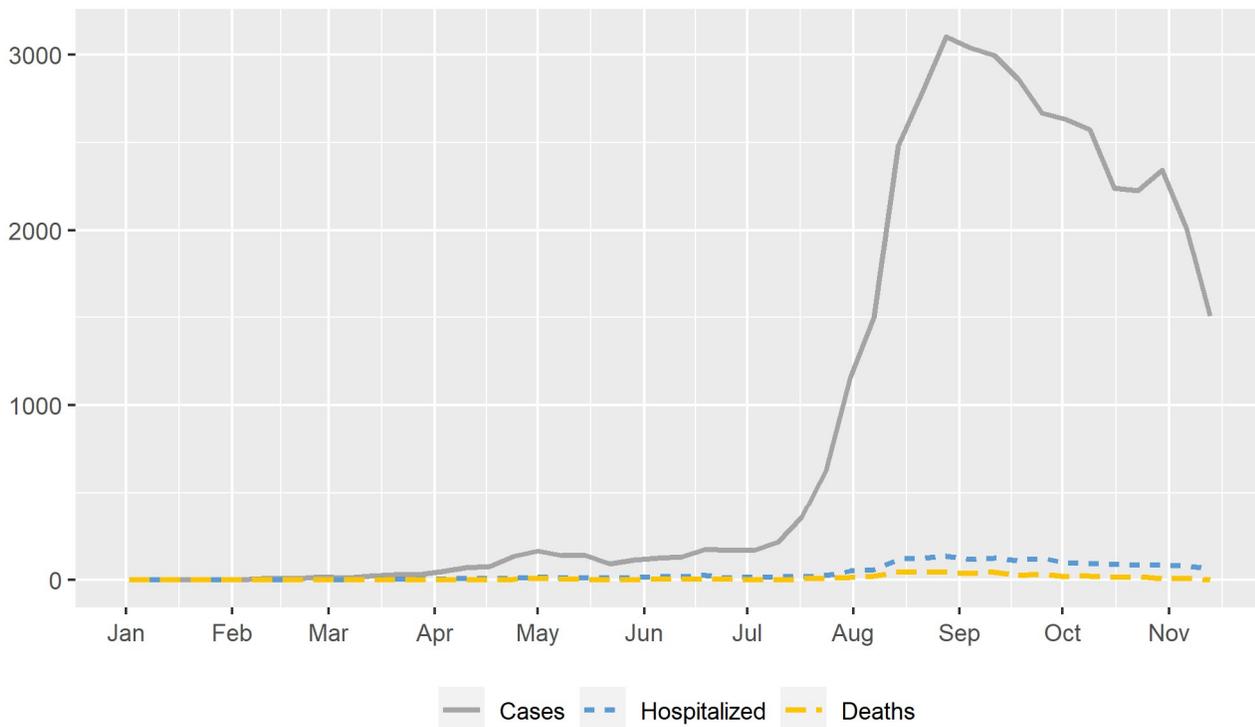
Oregon's Weekly Surveillance Summary



**Table 2. COVID-19 Breakthrough cases by vaccine manufacturer and severity<sup>6</sup>**

Vaccine manufacturer	Primary series completed	Cases	Hospitalizations	Deaths	Cases per 100,000 vaccinated
Pfizer	1,473,342	20,675	794	233	1,403.3
Moderna	932,895	11,108	509	122	1,190.7
Johnson & Johnson/Janssen	228,918	5,023	268	64	2,194.2

**Figure 2. COVID-19 breakthrough cases, hospitalizations and deaths, by week**



<sup>6</sup> Table 2 provides the number of cases per 100,000 vaccinated individuals by vaccine manufacturer. Because this figure does not account for the time that each person has been fully vaccinated, it is not a true rate and should not be interpreted as such.

# COVID-19 Breakthrough Report

Oregon's Weekly Surveillance Summary



To date, 4.5% of all known breakthrough cases have been hospitalized (n=1,840), and only 1.1% have died (n=469).<sup>7</sup> The median age of the people who have died is 81 (range: 34-103). It is important to note that not all vaccine breakthrough cases are reported to public health, which may cause the proportions in the following section to appear higher than in reality. These figures are not vaccine breakthrough hospitalization or death rates and should not be interpreted as such.

Tables 3, 4 and 5 provide detailed vaccine breakthrough severity data by age, race and ethnicity. Both the risk of hospitalization and death increase with age.

**Table 3. COVID-19 breakthrough cases by age group and severity**

Age group	Breakthrough cases	Breakthrough hospitalizations	Breakthrough deaths
12-19	1,958	14	0
20-29	5,722	35	0
30-39	7,264	57	2
40-49	6,968	88	8
50-59	6,370	174	16
60-69	5,869	369	72
70-79	4,334	519	127
80+	2,772	584	244
Total	41,257	1,840	469

<sup>7</sup> Cumulative deaths reported here reflect all breakthrough cases known to have died since January 1, 2021. There may be a lag of several weeks between when an individual dies and when their death appears in this report. Increases in cumulative deaths between this and subsequent reports should not be interpreted as individuals who have died within the past week.

# COVID-19 Breakthrough Report

Oregon's Weekly Surveillance Summary



**Table 4. COVID-19 breakthrough case severity by race<sup>8</sup>**

<b>Race</b>	<b>Cases</b>	<b>Hospitalizations</b>	<b>Deaths</b>
> 1 race	390	13	2
American Indian/Alaska Native	548	26	6
Asian	960	32	10
Black	630	42	8
Not Available	10,307	242	104
Other	2,974	104	35
Pacific Islander	94	4	1
White	25,354	1,377	303
<b>Total</b>	<b>41,257</b>	<b>1,840</b>	<b>469</b>

**Table 5. COVID-19 breakthrough case severity by ethnicity**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Cases</b>	<b>Hospitalizations</b>	<b>Deaths</b>
Hispanic	3,055	79	13
Not Hispanic	21,337	1,165	259
Unknown	16,865	596	197
<b>Total</b>	<b>41,257</b>	<b>1,840</b>	<b>469</b>

<sup>8</sup> During the case investigation, people are asked to self-report their race, ethnicity, tribal affiliation, country of origin, or ancestry. As of October 2021, 42,423 (80.8%) of the 52,483 persons who identify as "Other" race also self-identify as Hispanic or Latino.

# COVID-19 Breakthrough Report

Oregon's Weekly Surveillance Summary



Table 6 provides the proportion of vaccine breakthrough cases who have died with COVID-19. Approximately 80% of vaccine breakthrough deaths have occurred in patients 70 years and older. The proportion of vaccine breakthrough cases who have died with COVID-19 has increased over time. This trend is likely multifactorial and may be associated with increased COVID-19 transmission in our communities, increased disease severity associated with infection caused by the Delta variant and waning immunity over time in elderly populations.

**Table 6. COVID-19 deaths by month, by breakthrough case status<sup>9</sup>**

Month	Total COVID-19 deaths	Vaccine breakthrough deaths	Percent vaccine breakthrough deaths
March 2021	122	4	3.3
April 2021	109	6	5.5
May 2021	212	19	9.0
June 2021	108	15	13.9
July 2021	92	16	17.4
August 2021	571	128	22.4
September 2021	727	151	20.8
October 2021	445	112	25.2

<sup>9</sup> Data in Table 6 will be updated monthly and will reflect cases from the previous month.

# COVID-19 Breakthrough Report

Oregon's Weekly Surveillance Summary



## COVID-19 variants

**Table 7. COVID-19 breakthrough cases associated with variants of concern<sup>10</sup>**

Overall, approximately 6.9% of positive specimens in Oregon have been sequenced. Delta is currently the dominant variant circulating in Oregon. At this time, vaccine breakthrough cases appear to reflect the variants circulating in the community. Additional information on variants can be found here: <https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/oregon.health.authority.covid.19/viz/GISAIDVariantDashboard/Updated/OregonVariantDashboard>

Subtype	Cases
Delta (B.1.617.2)	1,604

**Table 8. COVID-19 breakthrough cases associated with variants being monitored**

Subtype	Cases
Alpha (B.1.1.7)	148
Beta (B.1.351)	16
Gamma (P.1)	62
Epsilon (B.1.427/B.1.429)	38
Iota (B.1.526)	29

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<sup>10</sup> As of September 29, OHA will align with CDC's classification of SARS-CoV-2 variants. Variant classification scheme defines four classes of SARS-CoV-2 variants: variants of concern, variants of interest, variants being monitored, and variants of high consequence. Delta is currently the only variant of concern in the United States.

# COVID-19 Breakthrough Report

Oregon's Weekly Surveillance Summary



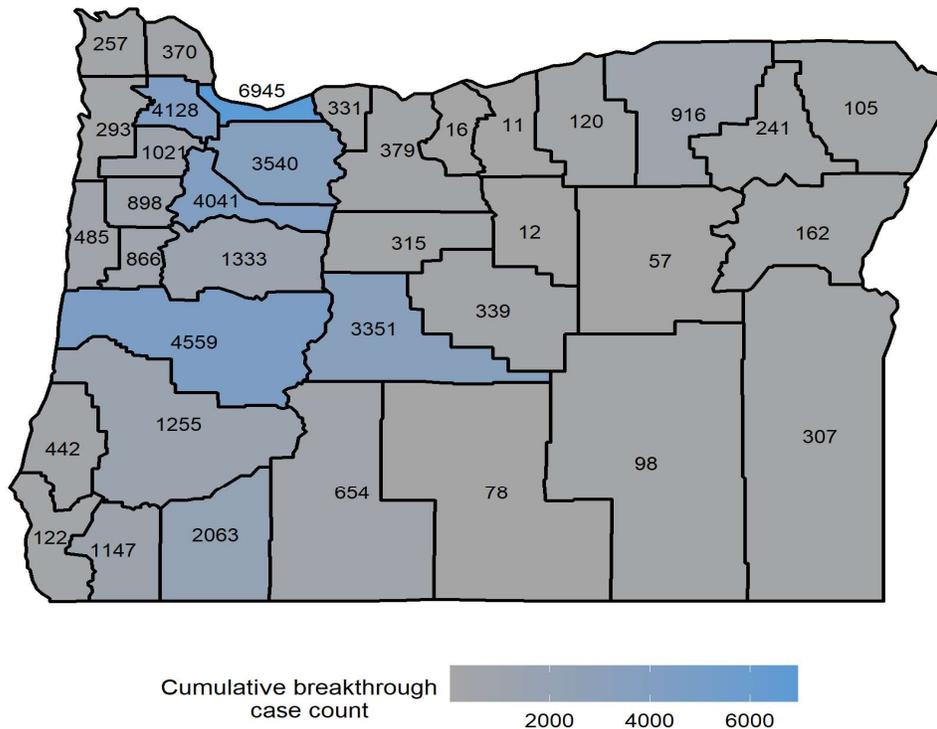
## Breakthrough cases by county

Figure 3 and Table 9 show breakthrough cases by county. In general, cumulative breakthrough case counts correspond with the population size of each county. Additional information on cumulative cases can be found here:

<https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/oregon.health.authority.covid.19/viz/OregonCOVID-19TestingandOutcomesbyCounty/OregonsCOVID-19TestingandOutcomesbyCounty>

Table 9 provides both cumulative and weekly data. The “Cases in previous week” column references the number of vaccine breakthrough cases newly reported between November 7 and November 13. This count may not reflect the full number of vaccine breakthrough cases that occurred during this time, as breakthrough case ascertainment can lag by several weeks.

**Figure 3. Map of COVID-19 breakthrough case cumulative counts, by county of residence<sup>11</sup>**



<sup>11</sup> Counties that have a total of fewer than 10 cases will appear grey without a data label.

# COVID-19 Breakthrough Report

Oregon's Weekly Surveillance Summary



Table 9. COVID-19 breakthrough cases by county of residence<sup>12</sup>

County	Cumulative cases	Cases in previous week
Baker	162	1-9
Benton	866	40
Clackamas	3540	173
Clatsop	257	1-9
Columbia	370	15
Coos	442	13
Crook	339	1-9
Curry	122	1-9
Deschutes	3351	171
Douglas	1255	36
Gilliam	11	0
Grant	57	1-9
Harney	98	0
Hood River	331	11
Jackson	2063	58
Jefferson	315	1-9
Josephine	1147	25
Klamath	654	40
Lake	78	1-9

<sup>12</sup> Counties that have a total of fewer than 10 cases will be reported as 1-9 cases.

# COVID-19 Breakthrough Report

Oregon's Weekly Surveillance Summary



County	Cumulative cases	Cases in previous week
Lane	4559	137
Lincoln	485	23
Linn	1333	50
Malheur	307	1-9
Marion	4041	125
Morrow	120	1-9
Multnomah	6945	244
Polk	898	36
Sherman	16	0
Tillamook	293	14
Umatilla	916	25
Union	241	1-9
Wallowa	105	0
Wasco	379	18
Washington	4128	153
Wheeler	12	0
Yamhill	1021	56