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### **Vaccination progress maps identify areas where improved vaccination access is critical to avoid “vaccine deserts”**

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Department of Health is unveiling its newest tool to help encourage more Hawai'i residents to get vaccinated: [COVID-19 vaccination progress maps](#).

Based on vaccination data collected to date, the Hawai'i Department of Health's Disease Outbreak Control Division has developed a new set of heat maps that show vaccination rates by ZIP code for each island. The maps will be used to identify potential vaccine deserts – areas where access to vaccine may be limited. The goal is to increase access through innovative community-based strategies.

“The vaccine is our best tool to move forward together as a state. These maps will allow us to work with partners to strategically schedule new vaccination clinics around the state,” said Dr. Sarah Kemble, state epidemiologist with the health department. “With this geographic information, we can deploy resources where they are needed most and bring the vaccine to where people live, work, and play.”

According to vaccination data on June 3, over half (52%) of Hawaii's total population has been fully vaccinated and 59% have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. While the state has made tremendous progress in the past six months and restrictions are beginning to loosen, there are still hundreds of thousands of unvaccinated people and vaccination rates are higher in some areas than others.

“We want this data to promote health equity by identifying areas where people might be experiencing increased barriers to vaccination,” said Joshua Quint, MPH, PhD, an epidemiologist with the Disease Outbreak Control Division, who spearheaded the mapping project. “We encourage people to monitor these maps and use them to encourage their neighbors to get vaccinated. Areas with lower vaccination rates represent opportunities to try new strategies that make it more convenient for people to get vaccinated. We are in a critical period where there is still ongoing community transmission. If more and more people continue to

get vaccinated, we will prevent future outbreaks from causing unnecessary illness, hospitalizations, and deaths. The COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective and represent the best way to protect yourself and your loved ones and speed up our recovery process.”

To view the new progress maps go to <https://health.hawaii.gov/coronavirusdisease2019/what-you-should-know/current-situation-in-hawaii/#vaccine>, scroll down to the Hawaii COVID-19 Vaccine Summary, and select the MAP button.

For a brief explanation, [watch the Weekly Dose on Facebook](#).

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