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Israel Imposes Restrictions on Citizens Who Don't Take Covid-19 Booster Shots

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Jerusalem, Israel - November 16, 2020: Religious Muslim woman wearing medical protective mask walks down a Jaffa Street. By. GETTY IMAGES

Israel is changing the definition of what it means to be fully vaccinated against Covid-19, as the country's leaders are now urging citizens who received their two Covid-19 shots to get a booster or face restrictions on dining, travel and other activities.

Additionally, holders of the country's vaccine passport, which was previously provided to citizens who took two doses of either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, must now take a Covid-19 booster shot from Pfizer within six months of their second dose or be denied vaccine passport privileges, according to the Wall Street Journal.

The new policy was unveiled during a press conference on Sunday in Israel by Salman Zarka, appointed by the government to coordinate coronavirus policy. “We are updating what it means to be vaccinated,” he said (via [WSJ](#)).

According to a study released by the Israel Health Ministry, persons who take a booster Covid-19 shot is ten times less likely to become severely ill and ten times less likely to get infected with the virus compared to someone who only received two Covid-19 shots. Those results were realized within twelve days of taking the booster shot, the study found.

All Israelis age 12 and up are eligible for booster shots five months after their first two doses of a Covid-19 vaccine, and with the Delta variant continuing to spread and even infect those vaccinated against the virus, the government has been moving aggressively to encourage its citizens to take the booster shot.

The U.S. has already approved a third-dose vaccine shot for the immunocompromised, and after meeting with Israel Prime Minister Naftali Bennett in the White House last Friday, President Joe Biden said he would consider lowering the length of time Americans can get a booster shot to five months after the second dose of a Covid-19 vaccine. The booster shots for the general public is not yet cleared in the U.S., but approval is expected mid-September.

The V.I. Dept. of Health is likely to fall in line with U.S. policy on booster Covid-19 shots. Local health authorities [recently announced](#) the availability of third-dose vaccine shots for the immunocompromised in the territory.

Israel officials said they were not certain whether additional boosters would be necessary.