

France's over-65s will need booster for COVID pass: Macron

November 10 2021



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People over 65 in France will need to show proof of a COVID-19 booster jab to be able to visit restaurants, attend cultural events and take intercity trains, President Emmanuel Macron said Tuesday.

The pass has become a routine part of life for many people in France

since August, with a complete course of vaccinations generating a QR code that is shown on entry to gain access to venues.

"From December 15, you (over-65s) will need to provide proof of a booster jab to extend the validity of your health pass," Macron said in an address to the nation warning that COVID-19 infection rates are climbing again in France.

Due to the rebound, masks will also again be compulsory for all students at [elementary schools](#) from next Monday, the education ministry announced after Macron's speech.

The new rule for over-65s will further tighten what is one of the strictest such regimes in Europe. There were protests in France when the measures were first introduced over the summer but they have since diminished.

"We have not finished with the pandemic," Macron said, explaining that while France is currently in a better position than either Germany or the UK, infection rates have gone up 40 percent over the past week.

Macron noted that "all the studies show" that six months after getting the [vaccine](#), "immunity decreases and therefore the risk of developing a serious form (of COVID) increases".

"The solution to this decrease in immunity is an additional vaccine shot," he said.

'Responsible and united'

Macron also urged the six million people eligible for the vaccine in France who have not yet even received a first dose to come forward and get the jab.

"This is an appeal to responsibility—get vaccinated," he said.

Macron said more than 80 percent of the people in [intensive care](#) in France with COVID were aged over 50 and announced the government would launch a campaign in December for 50-64-year-olds to have booster shots.

He said that the booster campaign for the over 65s now had to be "accelerated".

The president appears eager to make a successful fight against coronavirus one of his key boasts in April [presidential elections](#), where he is expected to stand for a second term even though he has yet to declare his candidacy.

Many analysts had warned he would face stiff opposition to the COVID pass plan in the summer but the strategy helped force a significant surge in vaccine take-up.

"To be free in a nation like France means being responsible and united. So I'm counting on you," Macron said.

The French leader added that the "vaccine alone is not enough" and mask-wearing rules needed to stay in place.

"Any relaxations that have been considered will be put off in order to keep the rules currently in force," he said.

Health pass checks will also be stepped up, he added.

Macron said France was "one of the most protected countries in the world" due to its vaccine rollout but warned that "we will have to live with this virus until the whole global population is immunised."

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Citation: France's over-65s will need booster for COVID pass: Macron (2021, November 10)
retrieved 5 February 2024 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-11-france-over-65s-booster-covid-macron.html>

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