



# MEDIA ADVISORY



UNITED WAY OF SALT LAKE  
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## **United Way of Salt Lake and Utah 211 Launch Ride United Vaccine Access Campaign**

*The new initiative expands an existing program with Lyft to increase access to COVID-19 vaccines*

SALT LAKE CITY — Today, United Way of Salt Lake (UWSL) and Utah 211 announced the launch of the Ride United Vaccine Access Campaign, providing access to free rides to COVID-19 vaccination appointments in Salt Lake County and surrounding areas, in partnership with Lyft and Regence Blue Cross Blue Shield of Utah. Vaccination rides are the latest implementation of the Ride United program, which seeks to reduce transportation barriers that prevent clients from accessing health care, getting quality jobs, completing education programs, and more.

In December 2020, Lyft announced its commitment to help provide rides to and from vaccine appointments alongside coalition partners, including United Way and 211. Utilizing the Lyft platform, Utah 211 is able to provide resources to eligible clients in Utah, ensuring they have access to transportation for their vaccination appointments. As the county, state, and federal vaccine rollout continues, the Ride United Vaccine Access Campaign helps eligible people get the COVID-19 vaccine, even if they lack transportation.

“Utah 211 understands the barriers that contribute to the community’s social determinants of health. The Ride United Vaccine Access program allows Utah 211 to connect more Utahns to COVID vaccination appointments, bridging gaps and inequities that contribute to health disparities,” says Beth Martial, managing director of Utah 211. “At a local level, Utah 211 is honored to help contribute to our public health prevention strategies by providing equitable transportation resources.”

This free service is available in nine Utah counties: Box Elder, Davis, Salt Lake, Tooele, Uintah, Utah, Wasatch, Washington, and Weber. Rides are available for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> doses and can be scheduled up to a week in advance through Utah 211. **Riders should call 211 or visit [211utah.org](http://211utah.org) for more information.**

The local Ride United Vaccine Access program is made possible by a partnership with Regence Blue Cross Blue Shield of Utah. The nonprofit health insurer provided a generous donation aimed at improving access to vaccination appointments for vulnerable, underserved residents by funding roundtrip rides, initiated through Utah 211, in at-risk communities.

“As more COVID-19 vaccine doses become available in Utah, we’re working on several fronts to help increase vaccinations throughout the state,” said Jim Swayze, president of Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Utah. “I’m especially grateful to partner with United Way of Salt Lake and Utah 211 in a collaborative effort to support underserved communities in particular and get the vaccine into the arms of more people who want it.”

Since the start of the national Ride United program in 2018, Lyft has provided tens of thousands of rides in more than 40 markets. For more information, visit [www.unitedway.org/rideunited](http://www.unitedway.org/rideunited).



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**About UWSL:** United Way of Salt Lake is working to create long-term change by harnessing the power of nonprofits, government, corporations, and thousands of individuals to work together and solve the most difficult problems we face as a community. Our goal is that every child succeeds, every step of the way. Learn more at [uw.org](http://uw.org).

**About Utah 211:** Utah 211 is a statewide information referral service, connecting Utahns to the health and human services they need, such as housing and utility assistance, food resources, legal aid, and more. For more information or to connect with 211, visit [211utah.org](http://211utah.org).

**About Lyft:** Lyft was founded in 2012 and is one of the largest transportation networks in the United States and Canada. As the world shifts away from car ownership to transportation-as-a-service, Lyft is at the forefront of this massive societal change. Our transportation network brings together rideshare, bikes, scooters, car rentals and transit all in one app. We are singularly driven by our mission: to improve people's lives with the world's best transportation.

**About Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Utah:** Based in Salt Lake City, Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Utah is the state's first health insurer and now provides more than 675,000 people with comprehensive health insurance solutions. As a nonprofit independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, Regence is part of a family of companies dedicated to transforming health care by delivering innovative products and services that change the way consumers in Utah and nationwide experience health care. For more information, visit [regence.com](http://regence.com), [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).