



Outdoorsville State Capitol
123 Mountain Street
Outdoorsville, Outdoorsville 11111

To: Dr. Rachel Levine, Assistant Secretary for Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
From: Director of Outdoorsville Digital Service
cc: Executive Director, Outdoorsville Department of Public Health and Environment
Date: April 10, 2021
Re: Recommendation for a Federal Vaccine Credential

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

With multiple initiatives around digital vaccine credentials currently underway across the United States and around the world, the State of Outdoorsville is advocating for a nationwide set of technical and ethical/equity standards for COVID-19 vaccine passports that would benefit Outdoorsville and surrounding states. By establishing a set of standards, the federal government would provide critical technical and ethical guidance on a potentially divisive issue, and would help ensure alignment among states and across state borders.

BACKGROUND:

With COVID-19 vaccinations now available to all Americans over the age of 12, the debate around vaccine credentials is amplifying. States across the United States need guidance from the federal government about how to regulate activities among citizens as they resume pre-pandemic activities. The State of Outdoorsville is specifically focused on reopening safely, as the state's economic engine relies heavily on tourism and business travel.

Vaccine credentials can facilitate reopening, as they may allow businesses or other institutions to safely reopen by requiring that individuals show their vaccine status upon entry into a building. However, as detailed below, there are numerous privacy and equity concerns associated with vaccine credentials.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Outdoorsville Digital Service recommends that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services establish federal vaccine credential standards that follow a set of technical, ethical, and equity criteria. We are agnostic as to whether the vaccine credential system itself is developed in the public realm or by private industry. However, the federal government should provide guidance to any systems that are built by private or public entities.



TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS:

Grounded in a review of international standards and best practices, Outdoorsville recommends that the Department of Health and Human Services promote vaccine credential systems that:

- Employ web-based and print-compatible standards that allow for integration across the United States and, potentially, the world;
- Are able to work on Android and iOS systems;
- Accommodate and account for virus variants in the present and future; and
- Support the Transport Layer Security (TLS) protocol and encryption for security.

ETHICAL/EQUITY REQUIREMENTS:

Driven by input from interviews with thought leaders, think tanks and published articles, Outdoorsville recommends the following ethical guidelines intrinsic to a federal vaccine credential system:

- Establish that access to vaccination is available to all consumers before a credential is adopted;
- Ensure inclusion by giving businesses and users alike the opportunity to opt-in;
- Require that system will not be used to restrict access to essential services;
- Guarantee offline functionality through a paper solution with printable QR code for non-mobile users;
- Establish that the system does not rely on proprietary software; and
- Require that system code be shared publicly to ensure that third-party tracking is prohibited and use of personal data is transparent.

For detailed information on these recommendations and sources, please refer to [Outdoorsville's Technical and Ethical Criteria for a Digital Immunity Credential](#).

