

Dubai rolls out vaccines to public transport workers

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Dubai has begun the mass vaccination of public transport workers, with the Gulf emirate aiming to remain open to international tourism despite a surge in cases.

The United Arab Emirates, which includes Dubai and six other emirates and has a population of nearly 10 million, has administered 4.4 million

doses—one of the best vaccination rates per capita in the world, and second to Israel.

The UAE has recorded 930 deaths from COVID-19 since the pandemic began.

Dubai gained recent attention after it sought to manage the pandemic without closing its doors, with its economic mainstay industry of tourism battered badly during the pandemic.

At a centre of Dubai's Roads and Transport Authority (RTA) on Monday, dozens of drivers and other employees—many from India or Pakistan—formed long lines for an AstraZeneca jab.

"We are the people most exposed to proximity to others because of work," taxi driver Salah Mohammed Ossman said. "I need to protect myself."

RTA has already vaccinated some 20,000 employees, according to Nada Jassem, head of risk management and safety at RTA, adding the goal of the campaign was to "vaccinate all transport workers in Dubai as well as their families".

Hossam Al-Hadad, who works for RTA's in [customer service](#), said he had long been waiting for the vaccination, citing the "fear" of all his colleagues "of being infected".

The vaccination campaign uses several vaccines including Pfizer-BioNtech, Sinopharm and AstraZeneca.

Last week Dubai ordered bars and pubs to close until the end of the month to suppress a spike in [coronavirus](#) cases, after tourists flocked to the emirate over the holiday period.

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