



# St. Johns County makes America's 2021 Healthiest Communities list

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Strong economic factors and positive behavioral choices helped make St. Johns County the healthiest county in Florida in a recent report.

St. Johns County was listed among America's 2021 Healthiest Communities, according to a ranking released June 29 by U.S. News & World Report and the Aetna Foundation, an independent, charitable and philanthropic affiliate of CVS Health. It came in at No. 181, an improvement from last year's ranking of No. 222.

The Healthiest Communities rankings, launched in 2018, looked at about 3,000 communities nationwide across 84 health and health-related metrics in 10 categories, from education and population health to infrastructure and environment. It lets residents, community health leaders and elected officials know about policies and best practices for better health outcomes.

This year's rankings — which show the communities that offer residents the best chance to live a healthy life — highlight county-level Covid-19 vaccine rates and other pandemic data, as well as equity and mental health that are considered key components that can shape overall health and well-being.

St. Johns County has one of the higher vaccination rates in the state. The Florida Department of Health released a report Friday that showed 57% of people in Florida ages 12 and older had received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine. St. Johns County was 10th in the state with a vaccination rate of 60%.

"The coronavirus pandemic has inflicted deep wounds on multiple aspects of a community's well-being — from which it will take time to recover. A county's population health metrics, including mental health, health outcomes and access to care, have been adversely affected, along with major hits to education, economy and equity," said Kim Castro, editor and chief content officer at U.S. News, in a prepared statement. "This year's Healthiest Communities rankings name not only

the leading counties in the country, but also produce data reflecting other predictors of individual and community health as the country begins to recover.”

Among the other positive factors for St. Johns County: Its smoking rate was almost five percentage points lower than the national median at 16.4%. The percentage of adults with a high school diploma (93%) was more than three percentage points higher than the national median. The county's percentage of adults with an advanced degree (53.5%) was well above the national median of 29.8%.

The county also soared above the competition with a median household income of \$82,252 compared to the national median of \$51,758.

Seminole County was the only other Florida community to make the list, coming in at No. 466. Last year, Seminole County was unranked.

The top five healthiest communities on the list are:

Los Alamos County, New Mexico

Douglas County, Colorado

Falls Church, Virginia

Loudoun County, Virginia

Broomfield County, Colorado

See more about the full St. Johns County rankings at <https://www.usnews.com/news/healthiest-communities/florida/st-johns-county>.