In response to third COVID surge, Louisiana launches COVID Defense

COVID Defense is Louisiana's free, easy-to-use phone app that provides residents of Louisiana the information needed to fight COVID-19, without compromising their privacy

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Today, Governor John Bel Edwards announced the launch of COVID Defense, Louisiana's exposure notification mobile application for iPhone, Google and Android phones to slow the spread of COVID-19.

Louisianans can now receive notifications informing them if there is a risk they were exposed to someone who has tested positive for the virus. Use of the technology is completely voluntary, private, and secure. COVID Defense does not collect the location of a phone or individual to detect exposure, and it does not share a user's identity. App users must opt in to use the tool and may opt out at any time. No personal information is required to use the app.

"In the last few weeks, we've seen staggering numbers in terms of deaths and cases and those numbers should give us pause. Last week we also reported our first case of the more contagious UK variant of COVID," said Governor Edwards. "Until the majority of the general public has received the COVID vaccine, we cannot let up and will need to lean on every other tool available to us. COVID Defense adds another tool to our toolkit to slow the spread of this dangerous virus."

COVID Defense can be downloaded in the iPhone App Store or Android Google Play Store.

When COVID Defense is voluntarily activated, the tool uses Bluetooth technology to exchange random tokens between phones without revealing the user's identity or location. To help ensure these random tokens can't be used to identify you or your location, they change every 10-20 minutes.

On a daily basis, an individual's mobile phone will download a list of all the anonymous tokens associated with positive COVID-19 cases and checks them against the list of anonymous tokens it has encountered in the last 14 days. If there's a match, the app will notify you with further instructions on how to keep you and the people around you safe.

“Louisiana’s free, easy-to-use phone app will give our residents the information they need to fight COVID-19 and protect their loved ones without compromising anyone’s privacy,” said Dr. Courtney N. Phillips, Secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health. “Like wearing a mask, washing our hands and social distancing, COVID Defense is one more measure we can all take.”

COVID Defense works in three easy steps:

1. Download the application

Download the free app in the iPhone App Store or Android Google Play Store. Add your phone to Louisiana's exposure notification system to get COVID-19 exposure alerts and to protect those around you.

2. Opt in anonymously

Once you opt in, COVID Defense will generate an anonymous token for your device. To help ensure these anonymous tokens can’t be used to identify you or your location, they change every 10-20 minutes.

3. Get notified if exposed

On a daily basis, your phone downloads a list of all the anonymous tokens associated with positive COVID-19 cases and checks them against the list of anonymous tokens it has encountered in the last 14 days. If there’s a match, the app will notify you with further instructions on how to keep you and the people around you safe.

For more information or to download the application, visit coviddefensela.com.