

Website Scoring System

The following system was used to assess SARS-CoV-2 variant threat level dashboards and supporting documentation during the study period from June 1 through September 9, 2021. Scores were given numeric values to assist in calculations, but correspond as follows:

1 = present (or meeting all criteria)

0.5 = somewhat present (meeting some criteria or specific partial criteria)

0 = not present (absent or not meeting enough criteria to receive a different score)

Overall notes

- For extensive websites, only content linked to the SARS-CoV-2 variant threat assessment page will be assessed.

Visualization and Organization points

Organized Site

1 – Website is organized according to the following criteria:

- Components (such as pages, links, and other resources) are clearly labeled.
- It is easy to navigate the website and find data and references needed to complete this assessment.

0.5 – Website is somewhat organized meeting criteria such as the following:

- Some components are clearly labeled.
- Some data and references are easy to find in completing this assessment, while some are difficult to find.

0 – Website is not well organized and does not meet criteria for a 1 or 0.5.

Content other than data is clearly displayed

1 – Non-data information (such as data use guidelines or methods) is clearly displayed according to the following criteria:

- Written information is organized and intent behind it is clear.
- Other information has clear organization and intent.

0.5 – Non-data information is somewhat clear meeting criteria such as the following:

- Written information is somewhat organized, intent behind it is somewhat clear.
- Other information is somewhat organized and intent is fairly clear.

0 – Non-data information is not clear and does not meet criteria for a 1 or 0.5.

Clear data format

1 – Data (information pertaining to variants and threat levels) is clearly displayed according to the following criteria:

- It is easy to tell which variants belong to which threat level.

- Additional or supplemental information is clearly differentiated from threat level data.
- 0.5 – Data is somewhat clear meeting criteria such as the following:
- It is possible to tell which variants belong to which threat level, but not obvious.
 - Additional or supplemental information is mixed in with threat level data or otherwise not clearly labeled.
- 0 – Data is not clear and does not meet criteria for a 1 or 0.5.

Quality and Transparency points

Data source cited

- 1 – Source of variant threat level data is clearly cited.
- 0.5 – Data is somewhat clear meeting criteria such as the following:
- A data source is listed and likely the source of variant threat levels data, but is not explicitly linked.
- 0 – Data source for variant threat levels is not mentioned at all.

Provide update frequency

- 1 – Specific update frequency for variant threat levels is provided.
- 0.5 – Update frequency for variant threat levels is somewhat specified such as:
- Indicating they update as frequently as possible.
 - Providing an approximate update schedule (ex. About once a week).
 - Update schedules that are not time-based such as planning to update whenever significant changes are made to variant threat levels.
- 0 – Update frequency is not provided according to 1 or 0.5 criteria.

Provide date last update

- 1 – Specific date of last update to variant threat levels data is provided.
- 0.5 – Date of last update to variant threat levels is somewhat specified such as:
- Indicating an approximate update date.
 - Providing an update date that could be for variant threat levels but is not explicitly linked.
- 0 – Update date is not provided according to 1 or 0.5 criteria.

Define variant classification algorithm (if applicable)

- 1 – IF website assigns its own threat levels, they should follow these criteria:
- Clear rules, requirements, conditions for assigning variant threat levels should be provided.
 - Detailed methods for applying these rules are specified.
- 0.5 – Definitions and methods for assigning threat levels are somewhat explained such as:

- Meeting just one of the criteria for a 1.
 - Rules, requirements, or conditions for threat levels are provided, but are not detailed enough to explain how levels are specified.
 - Methods for applying rules are vague and do not explain how rules are applied.
- 0 – Classification algorithm is not provided according to 1 or 0.5 criteria.

Cite variant classification algorithm (if applicable)

- 1 – IF website reports threat levels from another source, they should follow these criteria:
- List rules, requirements, or conditions for assigning variant threat levels on website or provide citation for where rules can be found.
 - Include detailed methods for applying these rules on website or provide citation for where methods can be found.
- 0.5 – Definitions and methods for assigning threat levels are somewhat defined such as:
- Meeting just one of the criteria for a 1.
 - A reference for rules, requirements, or conditions for threat levels is provided, but is not detailed enough to find or use.
 - A reference for methods for applying rules is provided, but is not detailed enough to find or use.
- 0 – Classification algorithm is not defined according to 1 or 0.5 criteria.

Provide threat level methods

- 1 – Sufficient methods are provided (or cited) such that one could download information from the data source provided and replicate variant threat level data.
- 0.5 – Methods are provided (or cited), but without enough detail to duplicate findings.
- 0 – Methods are not provided or cited according to 1 or 0.5 criteria.

Contact information listed

- 1 – Contact information is listed on the variant threat levels page or a specific contact for threat level assessments is provided.
- 0.5 – Contact information for some part of the organization is provided, but is not specific to variant threat levels.
- 0 – No contact information could be found on the website.

Accessibility and reusability points

Data use guidelines provided

- 1 – Guidelines for interpretation and use of variant threat levels are included on site or linked page.
- 0.5 – Guidelines are included but do not include all crucial information.
- 0 – Guidelines are not sufficient according to 1 or 0.5 criteria.

API or downloadable content available on site

- 1 – Variant threat levels or other data from a linked page are downloadable according to ANY one of these criteria:
 - An API is available and can be used to programmatically access any data.
 - Data can easily be downloaded through clicking a link on the website.
 - Data can be accessed through an established request process.
- 0.5 – Variant threat levels or other data from a linked page are somewhat downloadable such as:
 - API, links, or access process are available but don't work.
 - Data can be downloaded from another website or through another process that is linked to the website being assessed.
- 0 – No data from the website is downloadable according to 1 or 0.5 criteria.

Variant threat levels downloadable or API-accessible

- 1 – Variant threat levels are downloadable according to ANY one of these criteria:
 - An API is available and can be used to programmatically access threat levels.
 - Threat levels can easily be downloaded through clicking a link on the website.
 - Threat levels can be accessed through an established request process.
- 0.5 – Variant threat levels are somewhat downloadable such as:
 - API, links, or access process are available but don't work.
 - Threat level data is downloadable but data format is not the same as website or otherwise not functional.
- 0 – Variant threat levels are not downloadable according to 1 or 0.5 criteria.

Sufficient code and/or documentation for APIs provided (if applicable)

- 1 – If website has an API or other tool for downloading data, accompanying code and/or documentation is sufficient for understanding and troubleshooting tool.
- 0.5 – Documentation and/or code is provided but not sufficient for understanding and troubleshooting tool.
- 0 – Documentation and/or code for API or other tool is not provided according to 1 or 0.5 criteria.