



From **Caroline Graham**

IN LOS ANGELES

HOLLYWOOD power-players are using private jets to fly hundreds of miles and even offering \$50,000 'bribes' to get their hands on the coronavirus vaccine.

Strict rules in California limiting the shots to over-65s and medical workers has led to 'vaccine tourism', with celebrity agents and studio heads travelling to Florida, Hawaii and even Alaska, where age limits do not apply.

Last week, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis brought in legislation limiting the jab to those who can prove they are resident in the state after it was revealed that of the 1.1million people vaccinated in Florida, 39,000 did not live there.

Richard Parsons, former boss of communications giant Time Warner,

'I was asked if a \$50,000 donation would help'

is one of the few 'Covid tourists' who admitted jumping on a private jet to get a vaccine in Florida.

The 72-year-old – who did not break any rules – said: 'It's orderly and sensible. You make an appointment. You get an appointment.'

Doctors in Los Angeles have also claimed that some of Hollywood's super-rich are trying to 'bribe' their way to a vaccine.

Beverly Hills doctor Robert Huizenga said he had been offered in excess of \$10,000: 'We've been offered bribes. We see people taking planes to every location.'

'We've seen people try to get into the healthcare profession or on staff [lists] at nursing homes so they qualify for an early vaccine.'

One tycoon in his early 40s even claimed he was his elderly mother's carer to get a Covid shot.

Another doctor from Cedars-Sinai, known as the 'hospital to the stars', said: 'It's ridiculous. I've

Hollywood super-rich queue-jump by taking private jets for jabs in Florida



been asked if a \$25,000 or \$50,000 donation to the hospital will help.

'One guy, an agent for an Oscar-winning actor, jumped on a private jet to Hawaii because he discovered a vaccination opening there.'

Unsurprisingly, there has been public outrage against those who bend the rules.

Mexican TV host Juan Jose

Origel, 73, was widely condemned last week after he flew to Miami from Mexico City to get the shot and bragged: 'Thank you #USA. It's sad that my country did not offer me that security.'

But one woman wrote: 'My husband has terminal cancer and can't get the shot. Are you proud of yourself for playing the system?'

Let cooped-up children enjoy half-term sports

By **Mark Hookham** and **Glen Owen**

PM urged: Relax exercise rules to fight mental health epidemic

BORIS Johnson faced calls last night to grant more freedom to children as he looked to relax exercise rules and ease the huge mental strains of lockdown.

The Prime Minister has asked officials to draw up options for a partial lifting of rules that limit people to meeting one other person for outdoor exercise once a day.

Possible changes include letting people meet a friend from another household more than once a day or permitting socially distanced exercise in groups of three or four.

But Mr Johnson is being urged to prioritise children by letting junior sports teams and after-school clubs resume during the half-term break – which begins on February 15.

'School closures have led to an

epidemic of child mental health problems,' said Tory MP Robert Halfon, who chairs the Commons Education Select Committee. 'It is time they were allowed to play outside to enable them to reclaim their mental and physical fitness.'

Geraldine Maidment, headteacher of Annemount School, an independent nursery and school in North London for children aged three to seven, said letting them exercise together and play sports should be a 'priority' as lockdown ends.

She also called for schools to extend playtime when they reopen,

adding: 'Sport is so crucial. It is the oxygen that energises wellbeing. It teaches strategy, team spirit, collaboration. It gives a sense of belonging. It is everything these kids have been deprived of.'

'Children need to move – they have been sitting at screens. And they need each other. When you see children coming off football pitches you can just feel this excitement, this joy, the sense of purpose. That's what they have not had. It's so much more than just kicking a ball.'

Organised team sport for under-18s was put on hold this month

when Mr Johnson announced Britain's third lockdown.

Former Wales footballer Robbie Savage, who coaches a junior team, has led calls for children's grassroots sports to resume as soon as schools return. In a tweet to Health Secretary Matt Hancock and Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden last week, he wrote: 'These youngsters need to play the grassroots sports they love OUTDOORS...!'

Other leading sports figures warn that lockdown restrictions have hit children from the poorest communities the hardest. Sebastian Coe,

Olympic champion and President of the International Association of Athletics Federations, said letting children exercise and play during lockdown 'can lead to unquestioned mental health benefits'.

The Cabinet Office is expected to publish a 'road map' out of lockdown in the last week of February.

In an open letter to parents yesterday, Mr Johnson acknowledged the huge sacrifices families were making during lockdown. He told them: 'Whether you've been welcoming a baby into the world without all the usual support networks, finding new ways to entertain a restive five-year-old when the soft play centre is shut and playdates are but a distant memory, or steering a teenager through the emotional stresses and strains of these unprecedented times, you have been dealt the trickiest of hands yet played it magnificently.'