

January 5, 2021

COVID-19 Vaccine Phase 1 providers:

Happy New Year! COVID-19 has been one of the greatest challenges of our lives, but with vaccines finally in our state, there is hope and light at the end of this very long tunnel. We now have over 127,000 doses documented in the Colorado Immunization Information System (CIIS) -- all since December 14, 2020!

Our public health partners and healthcare providers have been on the frontline of our response since day one and you have served our state in extraordinary ways everyday. It's been a long 10 months, and this is the last mile of a grueling marathon, but in order for us to end this pandemic in record time, we must now carry out an unprecedented effort to administer every dose we can get from Operation Warp Speed as soon as it's received. We believe states that do not hesitate and rapidly deploy the vaccine will save more lives and their economy will recover faster -- I know you want this for our state as much as the Governor and I do.

Last week, Governor Polis announced updates to Colorado's Phased Prioritization for COVID-19 vaccine distribution. Updates to the vaccine distribution plan include an expansion of phase 1B to include adults 70 and older and frontline essential workers as well as changes to the age ranges under phases 2 and 3. See [covid19.colorado.gov/vaccine](https://www.colorado.gov/covid19/colorado.gov/vaccine).

We have made great strides vaccinating our highest risk healthcare workers, first responders and most vulnerable residents, but there is more work to be done. With limited doses of vaccine coming to Colorado for the foreseeable future, we have prioritized urgently saving lives and ending the healthcare crisis brought on by the pandemic. With this goal in mind and to be as efficient as possible, we would like to divvy up vaccination responsibilities. We are asking all local public health agencies to focus their efforts on prioritizing vaccination for any outstanding highest risk healthcare workers in phase 1A, as well as moderate risk healthcare workers and first responders in phase 1B. All other phase 1 providers, such as hospitals, health systems, pharmacies, and safety net clinics, should focus on vaccinating persons 70 years of age and older. This approach of using high throughput providers, coupled with the statewide reach of pharmacies and connection of safety net clinics to low income and minority communities will ensure a swift and equitable approach. We are working toward being able to announce by the end of this week ways for members of the general public who are 70 years old and up statewide to schedule appointments with hospitals and health systems.

We anticipate finishing the majority of remaining phase 1A healthcare workers around January 15, 2021. Based on current vaccine supply, we anticipate completing vaccination for moderate risk healthcare workers, first responders and adults 70 and older around Feb 28, 2021 and have set a Wildly Important Goal of vaccinating 70% of adults age 70 and older by this date. We need everyone to focus on vaccinating these critical populations while ensuring no dose goes to waste. If faced with a choice of wasting vaccine doses or vaccinating someone earlier, providers should choose to vaccinate someone earlier.

Once we are done with these groups, we need to be ready to vaccinate frontline essential workers, including teachers and childcare workers. While local public health agencies focus on vaccination of these more targeted groups, we are asking them to begin planning and scheduling for post-February 28 administration of vaccines to reach frontline essential workers in your county(ies), including education, food and agriculture, manufacturing, U.S. Postal Service, public transit and specialized transportation staff, grocery, public health, frontline essential human service workers, direct care providers for Coloradans experiencing homelessness, and frontline journalists. Doing this planning now is



critical for us to achieve maximum efficiency and for our preparedness. If additional vaccines are approved and received, we may be able to accelerate these timelines. If you have not already done so, please reach out to enrolled providers in your county to build a cohesive plan. If you need lists of enrolled providers, please email cdphe_covidvax@state.co.us. If you need vaccine administration support, please submit a request [online](#).

Lastly, a few important reminders: You must begin vaccinating within 72 hours of vaccine receipt. To request more time and avoid transferring doses, you must complete the [vaccine delay request form](#) and receive approval from CDPHE or the vaccines will be moved to another enrolled provider. You can also voluntarily transfer doses by completing the simple [vaccine transfer request](#) form and receive approval from CDPHE prior to moving vaccines to another enrolled provider. Also, it is critical that providers submit doses administered data to Colorado Immunization Information System (CIIS) no later than 72 hours after administration; accurate and timely data will help maximize efficiencies. Transfers that occur without our authorization and incomplete data in CIIS hinder our ability to maintain accurate records of vaccine. This, in turn, could impact Colorado's ability to receive future vaccine allocations from the federal government.

We know everyone is working as hard as they can to get our priority populations vaccinated quickly, and we thank you for your continued partnership and dedication to helping us achieve the monumental task of providing millions of vaccines to our residents. We appreciate our partners are already working hard and stretched thin, but with the new arrival of the B.1.1.7 we are in an urgent race against the virus to vaccinate as many Coloradans as fast as possible to end this crisis. We appreciate you and support you.

Sincerely,

Scott Bookman
Director, Division of Disease Control and Public Health Response

