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## **Jan. 14 Update on COVID-19 Vaccinations in Delaware County**

Delaware County residents are urged to complete an interest survey for the COVID-19 vaccine. The County is currently administering COVID-19 vaccinations to Delaware County residents in the priority Phase 1A group. This group includes healthcare workers, EMS workers, residents and staff of long-term care facilities, and medical examiner and funeral staff.

Due to the limited supply of the vaccine, healthcare workers, EMS staff, long-term care facilities, and medical examiner and funeral staff are the priority for vaccination distribution. Delaware County is committed to ensuring a safe and timely distribution of the COVID-19 vaccination and continues to work with the County's hospitals and the Chester County Health Department to administer the vaccine as quickly as possible. As of Jan. 14, 12,343 COVID-19 vaccines were administered in the county, which is a similar rate compared to neighboring counties.

The Chester County Health Department, as well as many other vaccine providers, continue to vaccinate individuals in Phase 1A. The Chester County Health Department is aware of the recent announcement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services about a shift in populations included in Phase 1B, and all vaccine doses being approved for distribution to states. The Health Department is assessing the impact of this announcement on its current approach for vaccinations and transition from Phase 1A to 1B. Delaware County and the Chester County Health Department are eager to move to Phase 1B as quickly as possible, however we must be sure we can do so without being limited by our vaccine supply.

The Chester County Health Department has updated its home page and vaccine webpage to include information and links for residents to learn more about the vaccine phases and to indicate interest in receiving a vaccine:

<https://chesco.org/4822/COVID19Vaccine>

Phase 1A Priority Groups:

Phase 1A Groups	Distribution Plan
EMS Personnel	Our hospitals are vaccinating all EMS personnel within their catchment area. All Delaware County EMS agencies have been assigned to a Hospital Catchment area to receive their vaccine. Communications on how to receive the vaccine will come from the Catchment area EMS Chief to each EMS Agency Leader for dissemination when the vaccine is available. EMS Agency leaders are directed to contact the Delaware County Regional EMS Office for additional information, and EMS providers are directed to their agency leadership. In some cases, Delaware County EMS providers may be directed to receive their vaccine elsewhere if an opportunity arises to receive the vaccine early. When this occurs, EMS providers will be contacted by the Delaware County Regional EMS Office.
Healthcare Personnel Affiliated with a Hospital/Health System	Private healthcare practice/physicians affiliated with any of our local hospitals/health systems must contact the hospital/health system to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.
Healthcare Personnel <b>NOT Affiliated</b> with a Hospital/Health System	Private healthcare practice/physicians <b>NOT</b> affiliated with any of our local hospitals/health systems can receive the COVID-19 vaccine from the Chester County Health Department, Delaware County, and its partners. <b>Please complete the <a href="#">Healthcare Vaccine Interest Survey</a> as a practice, or an individual, to indicate your interest in receiving the vaccine.</b> Your information will be shared with our Vaccination Team who will send a notification about registering for vaccine appointments as vaccine and time slots become available. Please be patient if you do not receive the link immediately, it is because vaccine or time slots are not available. This survey is open to all healthcare specialties/disciplines.
Long-Term Care Personnel and Residents	The PA Department of Health (PA DOH) has contracted with pharmacies to provide the vaccine to staff and residents in skilled nursing facilities. PA DOH will be communicating its plans for non-skill nursing facilities.
Medical Examiner and Funeral Staff	Delaware County has provided information on where its Medical Examiner staff can obtain the vaccine. The County will communicate to funeral home staff in the near future.

Unaffiliated healthcare providers should also check with local health systems for information on the vaccine becoming available at those locations as spots open up in their health system.

The County is currently preparing to vaccinate **Phase 1B priority groups**. Phase 1B includes Childcare Staff, Corrections Staff, County, and Municipal Administration Staff, Educators/Education Staff, Firefighters, Food and Agriculture Staff, Grocery Store Staff, Law Enforcement, Manufacturing Staff, Transit Staff, U.S. Postal Service Staff and residents age 75 years and older.

While we do not have a definitive time for advancing into Phase 1B, we are eager to move into that phase once we confirm that Phase 1A is well enough underway, and we are not limited in our vaccine supply. Phase 1B groups are encouraged to educate their workforce about the importance of receiving the vaccine.

Please complete the [Phase 1B Vaccine Interest Survey](#) as an organization, or an individual, to indicate your interest in receiving the vaccine. Your information will be shared with our Vaccination Team who will send communication about registering for vaccine appointments as vaccine and time slots become available. Please be patient if you do not receive the link immediately, it is because the vaccine or time slots are not available.

The County continues to plan for wider vaccination distribution. Vaccination efforts remain very complex and fluid and rely on the availability of vaccine. The County is preparing to open the Delaware County Wellness Center in mid-January. The Delaware County Wellness Center, located in Yeadon will serve as a storage and vaccination site.

Currently, there are two authorized and recommended vaccines to prevent COVID-19 which are being distributed throughout Pennsylvania, including in Delaware County. Both vaccines require two doses for full effectiveness. A second shot is given three weeks after the first shot in order to provide the most protection against COVID-19.

Vaccines are safe, effective, and a key strategy to protect all residents from serious illness. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has ensured the safety and effectiveness of the vaccines. The requirements to show that the vaccines are functional and safe have been met, with a quicker process and an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). More information on the vaccine approval process can be found here:

[www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/vaccines/emergency-use-authorization-vaccines-explained](https://www.fda.gov/vaccines-blood-biologics/vaccines/emergency-use-authorization-vaccines-explained)

The COVID-19 vaccine will not be a cure for the virus. It is another tool in the fight against COVID-19. Residents must continue to practice other proven mitigation efforts, including wearing a mask, hand washing, and physical distancing.