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COVID-19 Updates

The COVID-19 vaccine is here. It is safe, effective and free. Walk in to get vaccinated at sites across the state. Continue to mask up and stay distant where directed.

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Department of Financial Services

Press Release

December 16, 2020

GOVERNOR CUOMO UPDATES NEW YORKERS ON THE STATE'S VACCINATION ADMINISTRATION PLAN

Regional Vaccination Hubs Led by Local Hospital Systems to Work with Community Leaders to Develop Regional Vaccination Networks Ahead of Phase 2

State Launches Vaccinate New York Campaign and Website to Instill Confidence and Provide Public with Latest Information

cial Services Directs New York Health Insurers to Immediately Cover COVID-19 Vaccine at No Cost

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today updated New Yorkers on the state's Vaccination Administration Plan and the establishment of Regional Vaccination Hubs to help facilitate vaccinations once Phase 2 of the state's plan begins in early 2021. Additionally, the Governor announced that the state has launched the Vaccinate New York campaign and website to provide the public with information about, and help instill confidence in, the vaccine and the state's administration plan. To help ensure New Yorkers are able to access the vaccine at no cost, the Department of Financial Services has also issued a directive to New York health insurers to immediately cover, without cost-sharing, approved COVID-19 immunizations and their administration.

"This is the most ambitious governmental operation ever undertaken, but we are New Yorkers, and we always set the bar high," **Governor Cuomo said.** "We want to be the first COVID-free state and that means remaining diligent. It's about logistics, and supply, and most importantly it's about public education and access. Remember, we need to have 75 to 85 percent of the population vaccinated to actually win this war. That's why we have not only launched the Vaccinate New York campaign and website to help instill public confidence in the vaccine, but we also have taken steps to ensure no New Yorker will have to pay a penny to get vaccinated. New Yorkers have already paid more than their fair share for COVID, but by staying united, tough and smart, we will reach the light at the end of the tunnel."

Regional Vaccination Hubs

The Regional Vaccination Hubs, led by local hospital systems, will work with community leaders to develop regional vaccination networks which will guide vaccine administrations once enough doses are in hand to commence the next phase of the state's vaccination administration plan. Under the state's plan, the second phase of administrations will be focused on essential workers and individuals in the general public who are most at risk.

As part of this effort, each Regional Vaccination Hub Coordinator will develop a plan for administration pursuant to the state's guidelines for Phase 2 of vaccine administration and submit it to the state Department of Health for approval.

In developing these Regional Implementation Plans, each Hub is being directed to work with local stakeholders and the community itself to not only build trust in the vaccine, but ensure

unique needs. For example, the needs of greatly from the needs of New York City. All plans must allow for efficient and expedited delivery and administration of the vaccine, and be based on a fair and equitable strategy which focuses on communities with lower vaccination rates and poorer health outcomes. Plans must be submitted to the state by the first week of January to ensure they are in place and ready to be activated once enough doses of the vaccine are in hand to begin Phase 2 in late January.

Regional Hub Coordinators are as follows:

Region	**Hub Coordinator**
New York City	Greater New York Hospital Association
Long Island	Northwell Health Systems
Mid-Hudson	Westchester Medical Center
Capital Region	Albany Medical Center
North Country	Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital
Mohawk Valley	Mohawk Valley Medical Center
Southern Tier	United Health Services
Central New York	SUNY Upstate Medical Center
Finger Lakes	University of Rochester Medical Center
Western New York	Catholic Health System

Vaccinate New York Website and awareness campaign

The Vaccinate New York website is the first step in the state's campaign to educate New Yorkers on the vaccine. It provides New Yorkers with a one-stop location for accurate and up to date information on the vaccine, safety, distribution priorities and a number of other details. Upon accessing the site, New Yorkers will find not only general information about the vaccine, but also a detailed Frequently Asked Questions section that provides facts about the vaccine's

al to help instill confidence in the vaccine and to
v York's Clinical Advisory Task Force, which approved the FDA's decision to move forward with the vaccine for New York late last week, and on New York's Vaccine Distribution and Implementation Task Force are also available on the website.

New Yorkers can access the website by visiting www.ny.gov/vaccine.

New York Health Insurers Directed to cover COVID-19 Vaccine at No Cost

The New York State Department of Financial Services has issued a circular letter to New York-regulated health insurers directing them to immediately cover, without cost-sharing, approved COVID-19 immunizations and their administration. This action supports the COVID-19 vaccination administration program announced by the Governor and the New York State Department of Health in advance of the initial delivery of vaccines to New York.

The guidance is consistent with New York Insurance Law, which requires New York-regulated insurers to cover preventive immunizations without cost-sharing under health insurance policies and contracts, as well as the federal rules interpreting the immunization requirements of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Federal rules require COVID-19 immunizations and their administration to be covered when provided by out-of-network providers for the duration of the public health emergency. Health care providers that participate in the Center for Disease Control (CDC) COVID-19 Vaccination Program must agree to administer a COVID-19 immunization regardless of an individual's ability to pay or health insurance coverage status, and may not seek reimbursement from the immunization recipient.

Department of Financial Services Superintendent Linda A. Lacewell said, "Under Governor Cuomo's leadership, New York developed a plan to ensure that we were prepared to administer a vaccine as soon as it became available. To support this plan, DFS worked with the industry to ensure that insurers would immediately cover COVID-19 immunizations and their administration at no cost to New Yorkers, which will remove financial barriers to this life-saving preventive care."

New York Health Plan Association President & CEO Eric Linzer said, "Making sure residents are immunized against the coronavirus is a public health imperative that will save lives. We commend Governor Cuomo and his Administration for their hard work to combat the virus and stop the spread, and New York's health plans stand ready to work with the Department, local

Reports and Publications

ı the delivery system to ensure that New Yorkers

DFS expects full adherence to state and federal requirements for coverage of any approved COVID-19 immunization and its administration.

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