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PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Outlines Vaccination Plans for First Responders, Provides Vaccine Update

First responder departments and organizations can visit www.mass.gov/firstrespondervaccine to learn more

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

1/04/2021

Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

Department of Public Health

Governor's Press Office

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BOSTON — Today, the Baker-Polito Administration outlined plans to vaccinate the Commonwealth's first responders, the next priority group within Phase One of the Commonwealth's COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan.

The Administration also launched a new interactive COVID-19 daily dashboard to provide a more user-friendly tool for the public to access data on the impact of COVID-19 in Massachusetts.

First Responder Vaccinations: Vaccinations for first responders, the third priority group within Phase 1 of the Commonwealth's **vaccine distribution timeline** (/info-details/massachusetts-covid-19-vaccination-phases), will begin Monday, January 11. There are over 45,000 first responders across the Commonwealth, a diverse group that includes fire, police and EMTs, who serve state, local and regional entities.

The Administration, through the COVID-19 Command Center and the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security, has worked with first responder organizations and departments about the best ways to vaccinate first responders effectively and safely. **Based on these conversations, the Commonwealth today announced three options for first responder vaccinations:**

1. Qualifying departments may request vaccines to be administered on-site. Departments that would like to vaccinate their own first responder staff **must follow the guidance for the Massachusetts COVID-19 Vaccine Program** (/doc/vaccine-administration-guidance/download) (MCVP) and have the capacity to vaccinate 200 individuals.

2. First responders can schedule an appointment at a first responder vaccination site. **View a list of locations here.** (/info-details/covid-19-vaccination-locations)
3. Mass vaccination sites will also be available for first responders to access the vaccine, which will be launched by the Commonwealth in the coming weeks.

First responder departments and organizations can visit **www.mass.gov/firstrespondervaccine** (/firstrespondervaccine) to learn more about these options.

Vaccine Phase 2 Priority Group Adjustment: The Commonwealth today is updating its Vaccine Distribution plan today. Based on this recommendation of the COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory group, we are updating prioritization so that individuals age 75+ are included in Phase 2, Group 1, along with individuals of all ages with 2+ comorbidities. This follows revised recommendations from

the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice (ACIP) issued on December 22. Following the ACIP change, the Commonwealth's COVID-19 Advisory Group convened December 23 and 30 to discuss any changes to its previous recommendations were warranted. The Group came to consensus on a single change to the current recommendations, taking into particular consideration ACIP's highlighting of individuals age 75 and older as being at particular risk of serious complications of COVID-19.

The revised vaccine distribution timeline will be reflected on **www.mass.gov/covidvaccine** (/covidvaccine) later today.

Interactive COVID-19 Dashboard: The new interactive COVID-19 dashboard contains all the data elements of the current daily dashboard in addition to some of the elements from the weekly dashboard, such as the positivity rate and the testing rate for cities and towns. This interactive feature will allow users to view all the data points from the daily dashboard and several from the weekly dashboard live on the website, with an added ability to customize the data view. For example, users may explore data by focusing on certain data points or a specific period of time.

New interactive features offer the ability for users to:

- select specific timeframes through a date filter
- hover over certain sections for further explanation and more details
- view specific information like the positivity rate and the testing rate for different cities and towns by both map and bar chart

While the new interactive format has been designed to improve the user experience, the many data points currently being reported remain the same, including:

- COVID-19 overview and trends
- cases, testing, hospitalization and deaths
- higher education and long term care facility data
- breakdowns by city and town

Researchers and others interested in the raw data still have the ability to see and download the raw files from the website, as can be done currently. The Department of Public Health will continue to refine the data available on the new dashboard, with additional enhancements planned in early 2021. The new dashboard (/info-details/covid-19-response-reporting), powered by Tableau, will be available on the current webpage.

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services

Executive Office of Health and Human Services
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