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Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Expands Eligibility for New Jersey's COVID-19 Vaccination Program

03/26/2021

Expansion Includes Individuals Ages 55-64, Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Higher Education Workers, and Other Frontline Essential Workers and High-Risk Groups

TRENTON – Governor Murphy today announced the expansion of eligibility for more frontline essential workers and high-risk groups in New Jersey's COVID-19 vaccination program. Eligible groups include individuals ages 55-64, individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, higher education educators and staff, and communications and utility infrastructure workers among others.

"Our Administration has worked closely with communities to build an extensive vaccination infrastructure and has opened over 700 vaccination sites across the state," **said Governor Murphy.** "We are already averaging approximately half a million shots per week, and with an expected increase in our federal allocation, we are confident we can expand our vaccination program to more of our essential workers and vulnerable populations. Together with our community partners and a steady supply of vaccine from the federal government, we will meet – and exceed – our goal of vaccinating 4.7 million New Jersey adults."
"New Jersey's phased vaccine rollout continues to prioritize preventing severe illness and death and supporting essential societal functioning," **said New Jersey Department of Health Commissioner Judith Persichilli.** "With the anticipated increased supply of vaccine, more New Jersey residents will have the opportunity to be protected against COVID-19."

"The strength and resilience of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities throughout this public health emergency has been amazing," **said New Jersey Department of Human Services Acting Commissioner Sarah Adelman.** "We're very pleased to be able to make vaccination more accessible so individuals can return to their normal lives in the community. In partnership with the Department of Health, we have been working since January to help vaccinate individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities living in congregate settings, and have been encouraging individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who met other criteria to sign up for vaccination. We're now thrilled to be able to include all individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities over the age of 16, who, along with their families and caregivers, have persevered through so much in the past year. I encourage all eligible individuals to register to get vaccinated and help bring this pandemic closer to an end."

Beginning Monday, April 5, the following groups are eligible for vaccination:

- Individuals ages 55-64;
- Individuals ages 16 and up with intellectual and developmental disabilities;
- Educators, including support staff, in higher education settings;
- Communications infrastructure support, including engineers, and technicians, and members of the press;

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- Real estate, building, and home service workers, including construction workers, code officials, plumbers, electricians, HVAC technicians, property management, and maintenance workers;
- Retail financial institution workers, including bank tellers, lending services, public accounting, and check-cashing workers;
- Sanitation workers providing disinfection and janitorial services, city sanitation workers; residential, commercial, and industrial solid and hazardous waste removal workers;
- Laundry service workers, including those working in laundromats, laundry services, and dry cleaners;
- Utility workers including, electrical generation and supply system, natural gas delivery, nuclear power plant, water supply, telephone, cable/fiber/optical/broadband/cellular service workers; and,
- Librarians and support staff at municipal, county, and state libraries.

For more information about eligibility, statewide vaccination site locations, and to preregister for a vaccination, visit https://covid19.nj.gov/vaccine (https://covid19.nj.gov/vaccine).

For more information on CDC criteria for eligibility, please click here (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html).

"We are equally pleased and relieved that Gov. Murphy and his administration have recognized the need to make professors and other college-university employees eligible for COVID-19 vaccines," **said Donna M. Chiera, president of the American Federation of Teachers New Jersey (AFTNJ)**. "Many of our members worked on campuses throughout this pandemic with limited PPE and no access to testing through their employers. As we ramp up for fall 2021, having higher education employees vaccinated will make the opening of college and university campuses safe for our students, our members, their families and the communities they live in."

“AARP New Jersey applauds the decision by Governor Murphy to expand eligibility for COVID-19 vaccines to all New Jerseyans 55 and older,” **said AARP New Jersey State Director, Stephanie Hunsinger**. “Since the start of the pandemic, nearly 95 percent of deaths from COVID-19 have been among people 50 and older. The data clearly shows the older people are, the higher their risk of experiencing serious illness, including death, if they contract COVID-19. We are strongly encouraged the state is prioritizing older New Jerseyans in the distribution of the vaccine.”

“All along, we have been out supporting our customers and communities, following the rigorous guidelines and protocols,” **said Ralph LaRossa, PSEG Chief Operating Officer**. “Our brave workforce is committed to keeping every one of our customers safe as we generate and deliver the energy they need to navigate this unprecedented health crisis. We are pleased that the governor has recognized the vaccination need for thousands of our critical utility workers who serve on the front lines of maintaining New Jersey’s economy and keeping the power on for millions of homes and businesses. All of us at PSEG appreciate this step, which recognizes that thousands and thousands of our dedicated employees never stopped working throughout the COVID-19 pandemic to continue to deliver the safe, reliable energy our customers and communities depend on. At a time when our homes have also become our workplaces and classrooms, the reliability of New Jersey’s energy supply has become more critical than ever.”

“To include sanitation, maintenance and building service workers in the eligibility categories is the next natural step,” **said Kevin Brown, Director and Vice President of 32BJ New Jersey**. “These essential workers come from black, brown and immigrants communities, which have been disproportionally affected by the pandemic. This measure will also ensure that the New Jersey commercial real estate industry returns safely and healthier than ever. As we approach this phase of the economic rebuilding process, the health of our workers is paramount in guarantying a successful come back. Thank you Governor Murphy for always putting New Jersey working families first.”

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