Governor Laura Kelly Announces Kansas to Move to Phase 5 of Vaccine Distribution Plan

Mar 26, 2021

Governor Laura Kelly today announced that starting next Monday, March 29, 2021, the State of Kansas will make the COVID-19 vaccine available to all Kansans (16+), entering the final Phase 5 of the Vaccine Prioritization plan.

"With the anticipated increase in supply from the federal government, we must get every dose of vaccine into arms quickly," **Governor Laura Kelly said.** "I strongly encourage every Kansan to get the COVID-19 vaccine so we can get back to school, back to work, and back to normal."

Kansas will become the 8th state to make the vaccine available to all adults, joining Alaska, Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Utah, and West Virginia.

As of March 26, 35.1% of the adult population in Kansas had received at least one dose of the vaccine.

In the early part of the vaccination program (December 2020 – February 2021), limited federal supply led to demand for vaccine consistently outstripping supply. However, the supply increases of recent weeks have reversed this situation. Local Health Departments (LHDs) and providers have started reporting a decline in demand despite the state opening to Phases 3 and 4 populations. To ensure no vaccine goes to waste, the Kelly administration decided to open eligibility to all Kansans.

Kansans are encouraged to use the Vaccine Finder tool to find the nearest location with available vaccine.

About the COVID-19 vaccines:

- **COVID-19 Vaccines work:** *New England Journal of Medicine* published a study on Feb. 24 that found researchers in Israel and the U.S. report that the vaccine made by Pfizer-BioNTech was highly effective in protecting against infection with the COVID-19 virus, lowering people's chances of getting sick with the disease—especially severe disease—and dropping COVID-19 hospitalization rates.
- Scientists have been researching mRNA technology, which makes it possible to create a vaccine faster, for years to prepare for potential infectious viruses. This research and the high supply of volunteers for clinical trials led to the relatively quick development of the COVID-19 vaccines.
- COVID-19 vaccines must meet rigorous standards and have undergone the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history. The three COVID-19 vaccines had to meet safety and effectiveness standards to be approved for Emergency Use Authorization and have been evaluated in tens of thousands of participants in clinical trials.

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