Governor Dan McKee and the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) today announced that approximately 5,500 new COVID vaccination appointments will be made available tomorrow at 9 a.m. Additionally, the Governor announced that beginning tomorrow, people who are 16 years of age and older, who live in one of eight hardest hit ZIP codes covering parts of Providence, Cranston, North Providence and all of Pawtucket and Central Falls, will be able to register for vaccination appointments at State-run vaccination sites and participating pharmacy locations.

These additional appointments are being made available as the State is expanding efforts to ensure that residents of communities hardest hit by COVID-19 have access to vaccine. The eight specific ZIP codes are: 02860, 02861, 02863, 02904, 02905, 02907, 02908, and 02909.

"From the day I took office my top priority has been building our vaccination capacity and getting shots in arms in as many Rhode Islanders as quickly as possible," said Rhode Island Governor Dan McKee. "I'm pleased that our supply from the Federal government continues to increase and I encourage all Rhode Islanders to sign up for their shot as soon as they are eligible."

People can register online at VaccinateRI.org. People who can't register online can call 844-930-1779. The appointments that open tomorrow will be for the State-run sites at Sockanosset Cross Road, the Dunkin' Donuts Center in Providence, and the site in Middletown.

After adjusting for age differences, the hospitalization rates in Rhode Island's hardest hit communities is roughly 3.5 times higher than in the rest of the state. Starting at age 50 and older, residents of these communities have higher hospitalization rates than residents who are age 70 and older statewide. Within these communities, COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted Rhode Islanders of color. The age-adjusted hospitalization rate among Hispanic or Latino Rhode Islanders is 4.6 times higher than the rate among white non-Hispanic Rhode Islanders. Similarly, the age-adjusted rate among Black or African American Rhode Islanders is 2.6 times higher.

RIDOH continues to work with the McKee Administration's Equity Council and other partners on strategies to narrow these disparities and expand access to vaccine among communities of color.

Outside of these eight communities, the groups currently eligible for vaccination are people who are age 60 and older, people who are age 16 to 64 with certain underlying health conditions, and people who are part of previously eligible groups (such as healthcare workers, public safety workers, and teachers and child care providers). More information about eligibility is available online.