Vaccination Appointments Offered to 11,500 Seniors For This Weekend

Dover, DE (Jan. 21, 2021) Utilizing requests submitted in a new system launched Wednesday, the Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) on Thursday contacted 11,500 seniors offering appointments for this weekend's large vaccination events in Delaware City and Georgetown.

Invitations to make appointments for these events were extended with highest priority for the limited slots going to individuals with age and health conditions that put them at greater risk of COVID-19 incidence or mortality. Approximately 200,000 Delawareans are eligible for vaccination in Phase 1B, which will focus heavily on vaccinating those 65 and older first.

The vaccination events Friday, Saturday and Sunday in Delaware City, and Saturday and Sunday in Georgetown are by appointment onlyfor individuals ages 65 and older who first registered. The Saturday and Sunday events – but not Friday's – will also serve 2,000 Phase 1A health care personnel who have appropriate documentation from their employer or DPH. That makes a total of 13,500 planned vaccinations for the weekend. Any person without an appointment or appropriate documentation will be turned away.

The emails issued Thursday to seniors who requested vaccination and met the higher-risk criteria came from **VAMS**, the Vaccine Administration Management System created by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) for use in multiple states. The email contains an individualized link and instructions. Because it is a national system controlled by CDC that has been used in previous phases, the emails issued Thursday may say "Your organization or employer designated you in a priority group for vaccination" even though people submitted their own requests. This is not a scam.

Those who schedule an appointment receive a confirmation email with a QR code they can print or show on a mobile device at the vaccination event, eliminating the step of filling out an immunization reporting record form. This pre-submitted information will also expedite reporting to the DelVAX system used to track vaccinations.

Some seniors without computer access who utilized the DPH call center to make their request were called back Thursday to arrange the appointment if they met the risk criteria.

"We are pleased that we will be able to focus on vaccinating thousands of our most vulnerable residents this weekend, and that we will be able to do so in an organized and efficient way," said Dr. Karyl Rattay, Director of DPH. "For everyone else, we thank them for making requests and we are planning the ways to reach them in future weeks as more vaccine doses become available from the federal government."

Those individuals still on the request waiting list are reminded that they must wait to receive an appointment invitation for a vaccination event listed in VAMS. A place on the waiting list does not a secure a spot for a vaccination anywhere else such as pharmacies or medical providers that may be offering them.

Even after individuals have submitted their initial request in the state's online system, if they do get an opportunity to receive a vaccine from their medical provider, employer, or pharmacy, they are advised to take advantage of it.

Also on Thursday, a list of pharmacies and medical providers accepting public requests for vaccination was added to http://de.gov/covidvaccine by following the link "Find Where to Get Vaccinated." Vaccines available through pharmacy

stores and medical providers are currently only for persons 65 and older. Pharmacies are asking those 65 and older to schedule an appointment using their online systems. They are not accepting appointment requests by walk-in or over the phone.

Vaccination event request system updates and tips:

- Total of 73,630 requests have been made as of 3:00 p.m. Thursday, an additional 17,354 requests since 4:00 p.m. Wednesday
- Some updates were made to the system Wednesday evening based on user feedback and questions, including indicators when users had not filled out required fields, and placing the requester's first and last names in acknowledgement emails.
- Individuals who successfully submitted a request for vaccination should check their Spam or Junk folders for the automated confirmation email they will receive from the VAMS system.

Reminder for those who make weekend vaccination events:

- The events are by appointment only for persons 65 and older who received invitation, or for Phase 1A health care personnel. Anyone without an appointment, or for health care workers, appropriate documentation, will be turned away from the event.
- Each person should bring their appointment confirmation with QR code or documentation of Phase 1A status, along with a photo ID.
- Attendees are reminded to please dress in appropriate clothing so that your upper arm can be exposed, including not getting out of the vehicle at a drive-through event to remove a coat or shirt.
- If someone has received a flu, shingles or other vaccination within the last 14 days, they cannot receive the COVID-19 vaccine until 14 days have passed.

As of midnight, Wednesday, Jan. 20, 54,760 administered doses of the COVID-19 vaccine have been reported to the state's immunization information system, DelVAX. Additional information about COVID-19 vaccine rollout is available at de.gov/covidvaccine. Questions can be directed to the Vaccine Call Center at 1-833-643-1715. People who are deaf and hard of hearing should call 2-1-1 or text their ZIP code to 898-211. Individuals can email their questions concerning the vaccine to Vaccine@Delaware.gov.

Delawareans over the age of 18 are encouraged to download COVID Alert DE, Delaware's free exposure notification app to help protect your neighbors while ensuring your privacy. Download on the App Store or Google Play.

DPH will continue to update the public as more information becomes available. For the latest on Delaware's response, go to de.gov/coronavirus.