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Michiganders over age 65, some frontline essential workers can receive safe, effective COVID-19 vaccine starting Monday

Michigan entering next phase for COVID-19 vaccinations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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LANSING, Mich. To help reach the state's goal of vaccinating 70% of Michiganders over age 16 and bring a quicker end to the COVID-19 pandemic in Michigan, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) officials today announced the state is moving to a new phase of vaccination on Monday, Jan. 11.

MDHHS is moving forward with vaccination of Michiganders age 65 and older; frontline essential workers including police officers, first responders, frontline state and federal workers and jail and prison staff; and preK-12 teachers and childcare providers. To date, 80% of deaths have occurred among those age 65 and older. In addition to vaccinating Michiganders who are 75+ in Phase 1B (Phase 1B, Group A), MDHHS is accelerating to vaccinate individuals 65-74 years old (Phase 1C Group A). MDHHS is accelerating implementation of vaccination of individuals 65-74 years due to concern around disparity in life expectancy by race/ethnicity for this group (Phase 1C, Group A).

“The more people we can get the safe and effective vaccine, the faster we can return to a sense of normalcy,” said Governor Whitmer. “I urge all seniors to get the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible and that all Michiganders to make a plan to get vaccinated when it becomes available to you. And as always: mask up, practice safe social distancing, and avoid indoor gatherings where COVID-19 can easily spread from person to person. We will eliminate this virus together.”

“We are pleased to move the state forward in the next stage of vaccinations,” said Dr. Joneigh Khaldun, chief medical executive and chief deputy for health. “These vaccines are safe and effective, and we especially want our first responders, teachers and older adults to get vaccinated as soon as possible. The strategy we are announcing today is efficient, effective, and equitable, focusing on making vaccine available to those who have the highest level of risk, whether it is because of where they work or because of their age.”

All counties may begin vaccinating residents over age 65 and seniors are urged to visit Michigan.gov/COVIDVaccine to find local health departments and other local vaccine clinics near them that are ready to book appointments. Eligible essential workers, teachers and childcare workers will be notified by their employers about vaccine clinic dates and locations. Eligible individuals should not go to any of the clinics without an appointment.

It is important to note that there is limited vaccine available in the state, and so there will be limited appointments available. As more vaccine becomes available, the state will be able to move more quickly through the priority groups.

MDHHS is following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations for prioritization of distribution and administration of COVID-19 vaccines. CDC recommendations are based on input from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), the federal advisory committee made up of medical and public health experts who develop recommendations on the use of vaccines in the United States.

Phases are as follows:

- Phase 1A: Paid and unpaid persons serving in healthcare settings who have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials and are unable to work from home as well as residents in long term care facilities.
- Phase 1B: Persons 75 years of age or older and frontline essential workers in critical infrastructure.
- Phase 1C: Individuals 16 years of age or older at high risk of severe illness due to COVID-19 infection and some other essential workers whose position impacts life, safety and protection during the COVID-19 response.
- Phase 2: Individuals 16 years of age or older.

These prioritizations may change as more information on vaccine effectiveness and additional vaccination products become available. MDHHS has provided additional prioritization guidance within these categories. **It is important to note that vaccination in one phase may not be complete before vaccination in another phase begins.** There may be vaccination of individuals in different phases that occur simultaneously. The timing of the start of vaccination in a phase is dependent on the supply of vaccine from the manufacturer, how vaccine is allocated from the federal level to Michigan and the capacity to administer the vaccine to populations. Decisions on moving to the next phase will be made at the state level.

More than 140,000 of Moderna and Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine have been administered to health care workers with more than 8,000 of those doses going to nursing home residents and staff. This data is being tracked on the COVID-19 Vaccine Dashboard, which also includes information on the number of providers enrolled to provide the vaccine and vaccination coverage rates by age and race.

Even with COVID-19 vaccinations starting in Michigan and worldwide, Khaldun urges everyone to continue to practice preventative measures such as properly wearing masks, social distancing and frequent handwashing to reduce the spread of the virus until the vast majority of people have been vaccinated.

There will be no out-of-pocket costs to individuals for the vaccine, however, healthcare providers may bill insurance for administrative costs. The COVID-19 vaccine will require two doses, separated by three or four weeks depending on the manufacturer. Michiganders should receive both doses in order to have full protection from the virus. Individuals who receive the vaccine may experience mild side effects such as low-grade fever, sore arm and general discomfort, which indicate that the vaccine is working. There is a robust state and national process for tracking vaccines and reporting side effects.

Michigan residents seeking more information about the COVID-19 vaccine can visit Michigan.gov/COVIDvaccine. As additional information and resources become available, it will be posted to this site.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at Michigan.gov/Coronavirus and CDC.gov/Coronavirus.

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Coronavirus Disease 2019

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- Submit a FOIA Request
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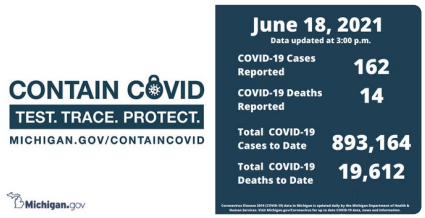
Stay Smart. Stay Safe. @MichiganHHS reports today, June 18, 2021, 162 new COVID-19 cases & 14 deaths. Michigan's total cases are now 893,164 & 19,612 deaths. Find the latest data & #COVID19 news at Michigan.gov/Coronavirus.



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