Gov. Little accelerates COVID-19 vaccine administration across Idaho

Tuesday January 19, 2021

Boise, Idaho – Governor Brad Little announced today he will seek to increase the number of available Idaho National Guard personnel from 250 to 400 guardsmen later this week to aid in Idaho's pandemic response. The additional guardsmen will assist in vaccine distribution.

"Our women and men in the Idaho National Guard have stepped in to meet critical needs at healthcare facilities across Idaho since the fall, and the availability of additional guardsmen to assist with vaccine distribution moving forward will help us even more in the pandemic fight," Governor Little said.

Governor Little also announced today the State of Idaho will offer healthcare providers new grants to more quickly administer the safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine across the state.

"The safe and efficient administration of the COVID-19 vaccine in Idaho is my number one priority," Governor Little said. "The State of Idaho ensures available doses are sent directly to healthcare providers, but the providers are the ones to get the shots in the arms of people who want it. We are actively working to ensure there are absolutely no resource barriers for providers in performing this critical role."

The new COVID-19 Vaccine Capacity, Safety, and Reporting Grants can be used by enrolled vaccine provider organizations to increase staffing to administer shots, purchase needed equipment and supplies, and improve vaccine access for hard-to-reach and vulnerable populations.

The amount each enrolled healthcare vaccine provider will receive is based on the number of doses they administer.

"Since the start of vaccine distribution in our state, Idaho has had a strong safety record and we will continue to make safety a priority as we work to accelerate the administration of doses," Governor Little said.

The State of Idaho is receiving a disproportionately lower share of vaccine compared to other states because the federal government is not allocating vaccine on a per capita basis. The federal government allocates doses to the state. The State of Idaho accepts all doses as soon as they are allocated. All doses are shipped directly from the manufacturer to local public health districts and healthcare providers. However, there will always be a lag in the number of doses Idaho has received and the number of doses administered because providers must be enrolled in the vaccine program and have received the training needed as well as have plans in place to properly administer it. They also must administer vaccine by appointment, which takes time and preparation.

The new grants will shorten the time difference between when providers receive doses and when they administer them.

The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare will communicate directly with healthcare providers today with the details of the new grants, and all available forms for providers to fill out will be posted later today at **https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/covid-19-vaccine/** (https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/covid-19-vaccine/).

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