Connecticut State
Department of Public Health

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Press Releases

02/28/2021

CT's Vaccine Program Opens to 55+ Tomorrow

Educators, Childcare Workers also eligible, but will receive appointment instructions from employers

~500,000 residents eligible to schedule appointments on 3/1, State urges patience

HARTFORD – Starting on Monday, March 1st, Connecticut residents aged 55 and over will be eligible to schedule and receive their COVID-19 vaccination through one of more than 130 sites throughout the state. In addition, public and private school teachers and other in-school staff, volunteers and bus drivers, and childcare professionals will be eligible to receive vaccine. Educators and childcare professionals will receive instructions from their school district, town or employer on how they will schedule their vaccination.

With more than 500,000 individuals in the 55+ population and another 160,000 educators and childcare workers, a weekly supply of around 130,000 doses of vaccine fro the federal government, and individuals who remain eligible from previous phases also scheduling appointments, the State anticipates that demand for the vaccine will f outweigh the supply as this new group opens Monday. Newly eligible residents are urged to be patient and recognize most will not be able to schedule their appointmen first thing Monday morning due to limited vaccine supply.

"We anticipate that our online scheduling systems and the Vaccine Appointment Assist Line will be inundated tomorrow and for the next several days with people eager to make their vaccine appointments. It's a good problem to have, and we have increased our capacity to better handle the anticipated surge in volume, but it will still require people to be patient when signing up," said Acting Department of Public Health Commissioner Dr. Deidre Gifford. "To ease the burden on the online and phone systems, we urge residents 55 and older to consider waiting a few days before seeking an appointment if they are able to do so. New appointments will become available each week and this will help reduce stress on the system in the early days of the roll out. We are all in this together, and we need to work together in order to get out of this pandemic as quickly as possible."

There are numerous vaccine providers who offer online and telephonic scheduling and eligible residents 55+ have many options for scheduling their vaccine appointments. A complete list of the various scheduling options located closest to you is available at ct.gov/covidvaccine.

In response to the anticipated spike in demand for vaccine appointments, the Vaccine Appointment Assist Line (877-918-2224), run by United Way of Connecticut/211, has increased the capacity of the phone system and the number of staff answering calls. 300 staff will be answering calls on Monday. The system is able to manage 1,050 calls at any one time. If that number is exceeded, callers should hear a fast busy signal to indicate that they will need to try again later. The Vaccine Appointment Assist Line staff anticipate being able to speak with 10,000 callers per day and once that capacity is reached, callers will hear a recorded message telling them to call back the next day.

When using the online VAMS scheduling system, people are reminded that they must first submit a form requesting access to the scheduling system. After that form is submitted, they will receive an email with instructions on accessing the scheduling system. This email is not automatic and can take several hours to a day to send. The form to access the VAMS system is now available to all eligible residents here, but access to the scheduling system will not be granted until Monday and new registrations will not be processed continuously overnight.

FEEDBACK +