Donate to the Florida Disaster Fund to Aid Hurricane Ian Relief Effort

Governor Ron DeSantis Announces Four New Actions to Increase Vaccinations, Reaffirms Commitment to Putting Florida "Seniors First"

On January 4, 2021, in News Releases, by Staff

Longwood, Fla. – Today, during a press conference at Orlando Health in Seminole County, Governor Ron DeSantis announced four new actions the state is undertaking as it enters the fourth week of a proactive approach to increase vaccinations, especially for Floridians 65 and older.

Governor DeSantis said, "Florida is putting Seniors First and I'm pleased to announce four new actions that will continue our proactive approach to offering the vaccine to Floridians 65 and older, as well our continued efforts to vaccinate frontline health care workers and long-term care facility residents. Partnerships with Florida hospitals remain critical to our efforts, but this alone is not enough to reach our vaccination goals.

"To that end, I am directing the Florida Division of Emergency Management to partner with the Florida Department of Health to identify additional sites to administer the vaccine and to be open 7 days per week, including the conversion of state-supported testing sites and partnerships with places of worship in underserved communities. I am also directing the Division to hire additional nurses to support these sites and accelerate vaccinations in Florida's over 3,000 assisted living facilities. We will continue to build on these efforts in the coming weeks."

The Governor was joined at today's event by Orlando Health CEO David Strong, State Senator Jason Brodeur and State Representative Scott Plakon, where he also helped kickoff the opening of Orlando Health's seven new community vaccination sites.

Watch the full press conference by clicking **HERE**.

FOUR NEW ACTIONS TO CONTINUE FLORIDA'S PROACTIVE APPROACH TO VACCINATIONS

1) **Expanding access to vaccine with additional state-supported sites.** Governor DeSantis has directed the Florida Division of Emergency Management to work with the Florida Department of Health to identify state-run COVID-19 testing sites that can convert into vaccine sites. Additional information regarding the locations of these sites will be available in the coming days.

2) **Deploying the vaccine into underserved communities.**
Governor DeSantis has directed the Florida Division of Emergency Management to identify places of worship and other locations in underserved communities where the vaccine may be administered. Florida has already begun a pilot program in Escambia County, where over 500 seniors have received their vaccine and have been scheduled for their booster shot, which they will receive at the same location.

3) **Reinforcing vaccination efforts with additional staff.**
Governor DeSantis has directed the Florida Division of Emergency Management to immediately hire 1,000 contract nurses to support vaccination efforts. These nurses will be deployed throughout the entire state to help run vaccination sites, including public sites run by the state or counties and private sites such as South Seminole Hospital. These nurses will supplement the many personnel already in the field, including 800 Florida National Guardsmen, who have been supporting the state's response since the beginning of the pandemic.

4) **Continuing to prioritize long-term care facility residents.**
There is no time to waste to vaccinate Florida's most vulnerable residents. Governor DeSantis is directing the Florida Division of Emergency Management to assume additional responsibilities regarding the administration of vaccines in Florida's over 3,000 assisted living facilities, supplementing and accelerating the efforts being undertaken by CVS and Walgreens, pursuant to their agreement with the federal government.

STATE OF FLORIDA VACCINE ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO-DATE

The opening of hospital vaccination sites along with these four new actions are a timely complement to our first three weeks of vaccinations, which included the following accomplishments:

- **Florida was the first state in the nation to:**

o Begin offering vaccines to staff and residents of our over 4,000 long-term care facilities.

o Begin offering vaccines to EMTs and paramedics; and

o Mobilize our county health departments and county emergency managers to actively vaccinate seniors in the community.

Week One

- Five pilot hospitals received an allocation of the Pfizer vaccine for frontline health care workers and residents of long-term care facilities. At the Governor's direction, they shared with neighboring hospitals.
- The Governor directed the Florida Department of Health, Florida Division of Emergency Management and Florida National Guard to mobilize EMS strike teams to immediately begin offering vaccines to staff and residents of long-term care facilities to supplement Operation Warp Speed partner efforts a week ahead of schedule.
- Florida offered vaccines to all staff and residents at over 100 facilities in Pinellas and Broward Counties in just 6 days.

Week Two

- Florida received the first shipment of the Moderna vaccine, which was immediately sent to over 170 hospital locations that spanned the entire state.
- The Governor also signed an executive order to give next vaccination priority to seniors over the age of 65, as well as highlighting the start of CVS and Walgreens' administration of vaccines at long-term care facilities.

Week Three

- Florida remained full speed ahead at vaccinating the state's most vulnerable residents and sent doses of vaccine to all 67 county health departments.
    - Florida received over 127,000 doses of the Moderna vaccine and distributed doses to the remaining county health departments and hospitals that had not received the vaccine to-date.
- Florida received over 118,900 doses of the Pfizer vaccine, which is being used to administer the second dose at the original five pilot hospitals, and long-term care facilities in Broward and Pinellas Counties who received their first dose through Florida Department of Health and Florida National Guard strike teams.

Week Four (Underway)

- As Florida enters Week Four, Governor DeSantis' administration is taking the necessary steps to ensure the vaccine – that is now present in every corner of the state – gets administered as quickly as possible.

ORLANDO HEALTH VACCINATION SITES

- Today, Orlando Health announced the opening of the following community vaccination sites:

o Orlando Health South Seminole Hospital

o Orlando Health Dr. P. Phillips Hospital

o Orlando Health Winnie Palmer Hospital for Women & Babies

o Orlando Health – Health Central Hospital

o Orlando Health South Lake Hospital

o Orlando Health St. Cloud Hospital

o Bayfront Health St. Petersburg

- Orlando Health has the capacity to administer over 10,000 vaccines per week. As is the case with all vaccinations in the state of Florida, vaccines will be reserved for individuals 65 years of age and older, frontline healthcare workers, staff and residents of long-term care facilities and individuals hospitals deem to be extremely vulnerable to COVID-19.
- To receive a vaccine at one of the Orlando Health locations, please visit **vaccine.orlandohealth.com** to register.

###

Comments are closed.

Contact Governor DeSantis

Executive Office of Governor Ron DeSantis
400 S Monroe St
Tallahassee, FL 32399
(850) 488-7146

Email Governor DeSantis

Email First Lady DeSantis

Email Lt. Governor Nuñez

Information Center

Scheduling Requests

Under Florida law, e-mail addresses are public records. If you do not want your e-mail address released in response to a public records request, do not send electronic mail to this entity. Instead, contact this office by phone or in writing. Copyright © 2012 State of Florida | Privacy Policy

Go To Top »

| Home | Governor DeSantis | First Lady | Lt. Governor | Media Center | Info Center | Judicial | Contact Governor | Español |