Governor DeWine Announces Expanded Vaccine Eligibility, Cleveland Mass Vaccination Clinic Opens to Public

March 16, 2021

(CLEVELAND) – Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and representatives from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), City of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, and Cleveland State University (CSU) today welcomed the first members of the general public to be vaccinated at Ohio's mass vaccination clinic at CSU's Wolstein Center in Cleveland.

The eight-week mass vaccination clinic is vaccinating approximately 1,500 Ohioans today and will ultimately bring vaccine doses to 210,000 people in Ohio. Similar to mass vaccination sites in other states, the site will incrementally increase the number of vaccines administered, and up to 6,000 doses per day are expected to be available by next week.

The Wolstein Center location was recommended by Ohio and selected by FEMA based on its proximity to a large number of Ohio's high-risk citizens and medically underserved populations. To ensure equitable access to the vaccine for underserved and socially vulnerable populations, more than 300 local community groups

are partnering with the state to help schedule appointments for those who face vaccination barriers. Translators will be on-site to assist those who speak other languages, and free transportation is available for those who need help getting to and from the clinic.

"This is an example of Ohio at its finest – citizens coming together to help ensure that all Ohioans, no matter where they live, have access to the vaccine," said Governor DeWine. "Today is a monumental day. With every shot, Ohio is moving closer to recovery."

While in Cleveland today, Governor DeWine also announced expanded vaccine eligibility in Ohio beginning on March 19, 2021, for phases 1E and 2C. Phase 1E includes those with cancer, chronic kidney disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, heart disease, and obesity. Phase 2C extends eligibility to Ohioans who are 40 and older. Between these two eligible groups, 1.6 million more Ohioans will have access to the vaccine.

Beginning on March 29, eligibility will expand to all Ohioans ages 16 and older. The Pfizer vaccine is the only vaccine approved by the FDA for vaccinating those ages 16 and 17, but citizens 18 and older may receive the Pfizer, Moderna, or Johnson & Johnson vaccine. The FDA has not approved the vaccination of children ages 15 or younger.

To book an appointment at the Wolstein Center Mass Vaccination Clinic or to find appointment information on the more than 1,300 local providers offering the vaccine statewide, visit gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov. Ohioans can also schedule mass vaccination clinic appointments by calling 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

The Ohio Department of Health, Ohio National Guard, and Ohio Emergency Management Agency are managing the Wolstein Center clinic with support from FEMA, the U.S. Department of Defense, the City of Cleveland, the Cleveland Health Department, Cuyahoga County, the Cuyahoga County Board of Health, Cleveland State University, Cleveland Clinic, MetroHealth, and University Hospitals.

“This mass vaccination site in Cleveland reflects a truly collaborative, federally supported, state managed and locally executed effort,” said Kevin M. Sligh, acting regional administrator, FEMA Region 5. “FEMA and our federal partners are committed to increasing COVID-19 vaccine access in socially vulnerable and underserved communities in Ohio and across the country, with an overall goal of ensuring anyone who wants a vaccine can get one.”

"Today is an important day in Cleveland. This type of large-scale site is essential as more people become eligible for vaccination and as new strains of the virus are discovered in our communities," said Mayor Frank Jackson. "I encourage every eligible individual to take advantage of the vaccine when it is their turn. Thank

you to President Biden and Governor DeWine for their leadership and commitment to making the availability of COVID-19 vaccines a priority. Together, we can help slow the spread."

“This is a big day for Cuyahoga County—we’re launching a major attack on the virus, with more than 210,000 vaccine doses to be administered,” said County Executive Armond Budish. “This is a tremendous opportunity that can help our residents return to work, school, church, and to see family and friends again. Just in time for spring we have a chance to make sure everyone in our community can be part of this lifesaving COVID-19 recovery effort. I encourage everyone who is eligible to get the shot—not just for yourself, but for our entire community.”

"We're so proud that after weeks of hard work and planning by our team and our key partners, Ohio's Mass Vaccination Clinic at CSU's Wolstein Center is ready to open,'' said Cleveland State University President Harlan M. Sands. "It is critical to our mission as a university to serve our community on important issues like this one."

The Wolstein Center Mass Vaccination Clinic will operate seven days a week from 8:00 a.m to 8:00 p.m. and will offer first doses of the Pfizer vaccine during the first three weeks of operations. Those vaccinated during that timeframe will be guaranteed their second Pfizer dose during the fourth, fifth, and sixth weeks of the clinic. The one-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine will be offered at the site during the seventh and eighth weeks. There are multiple free parking options near the Wolstein Center.

The state of Ohio is also offering two pop-up mass vaccination clinics in Columbus and Cincinnati beginning on March 18, and 15 long-term mass vaccination clinics will open regionally across Ohio in coming weeks.

For more information about Ohio’s vaccination plan, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov/vaccine