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GOVERNOR PARSON ANNOUNCES TIMELINE FOR ACTIVATION OF PHASE 1B -TIER 3

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FEBRUARY 25, 2021

JEFFERSON CITY — During today's press briefing at the State Capitol, Governor Mike Parson announced that Phase 1B - Tier 3 of the state's COVID-19 Vaccine Plan will be activated on Monday, March 15, 2021.

"Missouri has had a vaccine plan since October, and this has not changed. We have been very disciplined in following our plan," Governor Parson said. "With vaccine supply steadily increasing, we believe we are in a good position to activate Phase 1B - Tier 3, which will make approximately 550,000 more Missourians eligible to receive a vaccine."

Beginning March 15, Missourians in Phase 1B - Tier 3 will be eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. This includes those who keep the essential functions of society running, including K-12 educators and school employees; child care providers; grocery store employees; and energy, food, agriculture, and other critical infrastructure workers, among others.

With the activation of Phase 1B - Tier 3, approximately 550,000 more Missourians will be eligible for the vaccine. For the full list of categories included in Phase 1B - Tier 3, click here (https://covidvaccine.mo.gov/info-graphic-alt/vaccine-availability.html). Missourians in Phase 1A and Phase 1B - Tier 1 and Tier 2 will also remain eligible.

Currently, the state estimates that there are approximately 800,000 Missourians who are eligible and interested in getting vaccinated. By March 15, the state expects this number to decrease to approximately 400,000.

Activating Phase 1B - Tier 3 on March 15 will help ensure that there is a steady population of people who are eligible and interested in receiving a vaccine. This will allow vaccinators across the state to continue vaccinating Missourians without delays due to those who are eligible but not seeking a vaccine.

"While supply is still limited, we are expecting slow and steady increases, and activating Tier 3 on March 15 will allow us to continue making progress as supply expands," Governor Parson said. "If vaccine supply continues to increase, and if we continue to make the progress we've been seeing, we believe that we will be ready to activate Phase 2 within 45 days of March 15."

"For now, we ask that vaccinators work in their communities to plan for March 15. We want this to

be a smooth process, and it will be up to vaccinators to start planning now so that Tier 3 populations are ready," Governor Parson continued.

Also during today's briefing, Governor Parson provided an update on COVID-19 data and vaccine progress. As of February 24, approximately 12 percent of Missouri's population has received at least one dose of the vaccine. Over 350,000 Missourians have been fully vaccinated with both doses.

This week, Missouri was allotted more than 120,000 initial doses of the Modena and Pfizer vaccine for distribution across the state. Next week, Missouri has been allotted more than 128,500 initial doses. This allotment could increase if the Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine is granted an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which is expected to happen by the end of this week.

Once the Johnson and Johnson vaccine is granted an EUA, the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) will consider the recommendations from the FDA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). After DHSS reviews that data and confirms the safety and efficacy of the vaccine, the appropriate standing order will be issued to ensure the vaccine can be immediately administered once shipments arrive in Missouri.

Additionally, more than 233,600 vaccine doses have been shipped to CVS and Walgreens through the Federal Pharmacy Partnership, and 38,990 doses have been shipped to Walmart, Healthmart, and Hy-Vee locations through the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program.

The Federal Pharmacy Partnership with CVS and Walgreens will continue through April. More than 87,000 residents and 50,900 staff at long-term care facilities have accepted vaccinations through clinics held by CVS and Walgreens.

The federal government also recently announced a new Health Center COVID-19 Vaccine Program. The federal government will directly ship additional vaccines doses to partnering Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC).

FQHCs provide services to underserved and vulnerable communities, with two-thirds of their patients at or below the federal poverty line and 60 percent being racial and ethnic minorities. These doses from the federal government are in addition to the eight percent of the state's vaccine allocation already being distributed to FQHCs in Missouri.

The state also continues to move forward with regional mass vaccination events. There have been 68 mass vaccination clinics completed across the state, and more than 66,500 Missourians have received an initial vaccine dose at one of these events.

Targeted teams in St. Louis and Kansas City have completed 24 vaccine clinics with more planned in the coming days and weeks. These teams serve vulnerable populations in communities with limited access to health care.

Missouri's seven-day PCR positivity rate has fallen to 6.1 percent, and the antigen (rapid) test rate has fallen to 5.2 percent. According to CDC data, Missouri now ranks second lowest in the nation for average daily COVID-19 cases per 100,000 residents over the past 7 days.

"We have never wavered in our balanced approach to addressing this pandemic, and the data shows that we are winning the fight," Governor Parson said. "We are excited about the direction we're heading, and we will continue to take a balanced approach, fight COVID-19, and give every Missourian who wants a vaccine the opportunity to get one."

Missourians are encouraged to visit MOStopsCOVID.com (https://covidvaccine.mo.gov/) to view

the latest vaccine updates, find out when they are eligible for the vaccine, and locate available vaccinators in their area.

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