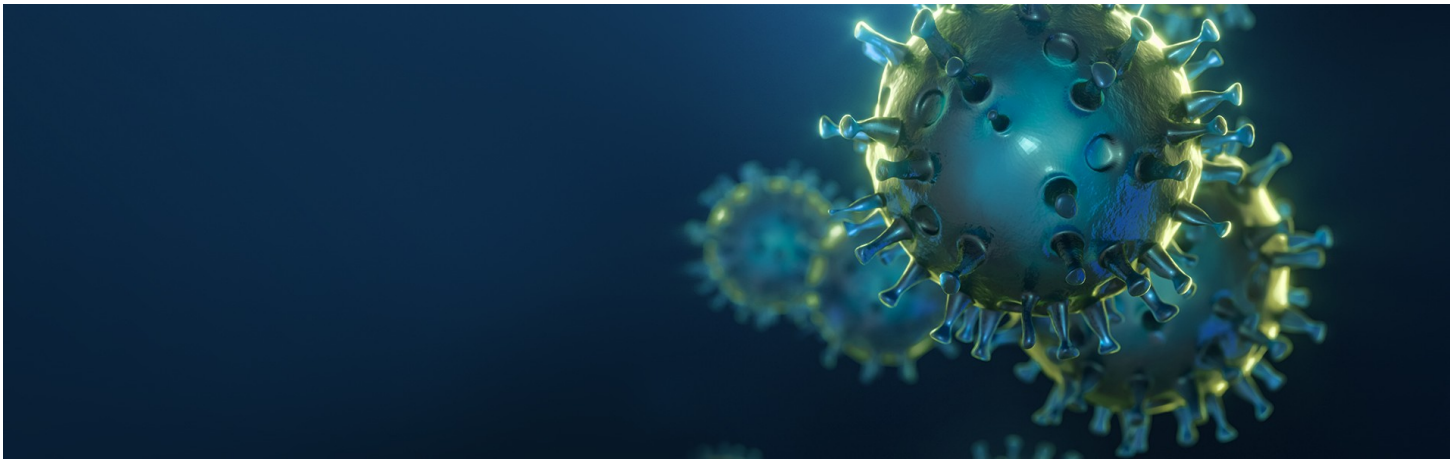
COVID-19 Update: Weather Delays, Central Scheduling, Virtual Townhalls

February 16, 2021



(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jon Husted today provided the following updates on Ohio's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

WEATHER DELAYS

Due to severe weather across Ohio and the country, both Pfizer and Moderna have advised that direct vaccine shipments to providers may be delayed one to two days. The Ohio Department of Health has contacted all providers that are expecting direct shipments to notify them of these potential delays.

Vaccine providers scheduled to receive a vaccine parcel today from Ohio's Receipt, Store, and Stage (RSS) Warehouse are receiving their deliveries on a two-hour delay.

Many providers are continuing with their scheduled vaccination appointments, but some have canceled appointments due to snow emergencies. These providers are contacting patients by phone call, email, or by posting on social media. Ohioans who haven't heard from their provider and are concerned about whether or not their appointment is still scheduled should contact their provider or visit their website. Ohioans who need to cancel their vaccination for any reason should contact their provider to reschedule.

CENTRAL SCHEDULING SYSTEM UPDATE

Governor DeWine announced today that Ohio's centralized scheduling website has been created, and the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) is now working with vaccine providers to enroll them in the system. The website will serve as a singular location for Ohioans to confirm that they are eligible to be vaccinated, identify nearby providers, and schedule their vaccine appointment.

Ohio and approximately 40 other states chose not to use the centralized system that the federal government intended to develop. Instead, Ohio chose to build its own centralized scheduling system. Despite the significant build time and configuration, the system was built within Ohio's intended timeframe.

ODH will work directly with vaccine providers to integrate their current systems into the statewide system and assist them in working through current waitlists to potentially integrate these commitments into the centralized system. Providers will be expected to use this system as Ohio looks to the future, and guidance will be provided in the near future regarding deadlines.

"Once most participating providers have signed up, the next phase will be to make the site live to those seeking to be vaccinated," said Governor DeWine. "Our goal is for Ohioans to have a positive customer experience when we launch the site to make appointments."

Outside partners, including the Area Agencies on Aging, will be available to help Ohioans who do not have access to the internet with appointment scheduling.

VIRTUAL TOWNHALLS

As part of Ohio's continuing efforts to ensure equity in Ohio's vaccination program, ODH is holding virtual town hall meetings focused on specific minority communities. These virtual meetings will involve local medical professionals and community leaders who will guide these conversations to discuss the safety and efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccine.

The meetings are intended to jumpstart conversations and give local leaders and attendees the tools they need to better inform members of their communities about vaccine facts, enhance access to trusted resources, and drive conversations in their own communities about why vaccinations are important.

The town halls will be streamed on Facebook and YouTube. More details are available at coronavirus.ohio.gov/townhall.

Ohio COVID-19 Vaccine Town Hall

Medical experts. Community leaders. Professionals.

Save the date for Ohio's COVID-19 Vaccine Town Halls, where your vaccine questions will be answered. Hear from medical experts, community leaders, and public health professionals. More details for how to watch livestreams for the following audiences will be shared in the near future.

- Monday, Feb. 22, 6:30 p.m. – African American Ohioans
- Tuesday, Feb. 23, 6:30 p.m. – Hispanic/Latino Ohioans
- Monday, March 1, 6:30 p.m. – Asian American and Pacific Islander Ohioans
- Tuesday, March 2, 6:30 p.m. – Rural Ohioans

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