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Governor DeWine and FEMA Announce Mass Vaccination Clinic at CSU's Wolstein Center

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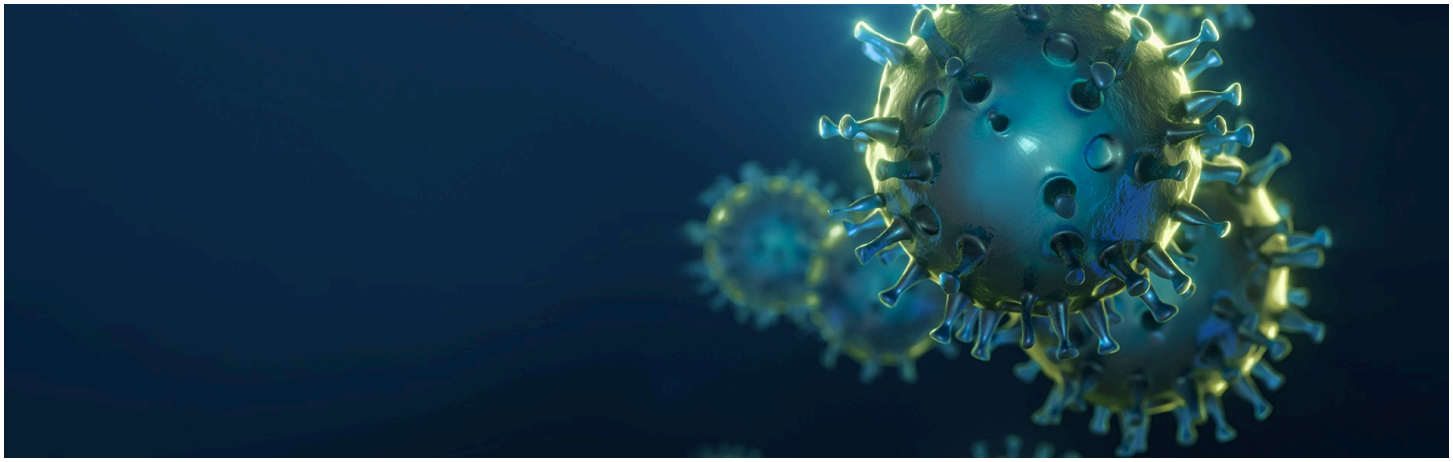

(CLEVELAND, Ohio) – Ohio Governor Mike DeWine announced today that an eight-week mass vaccination clinic with the capacity to administer 6,000 COVID-19 vaccines a day will open in Cleveland this month with support from the Biden administration and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The mass vaccination clinic will launch on March 17 at Cleveland State University's Wolstein Center in downtown Cleveland. The 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. Approximately 1.1 million Ohioans ages 60 and older live in northeast Ohio, and of the more than 25,000 total Ohioans who live within one mile of the site, nearly 45 percent the live below the poverty level.

Vaccine doses administered at the Wolstein Center Mass Vaccination Clinic will be in addition to Ohio's regular statewide vaccine allotment that is distributed weekly to Ohio's more than 1,250 established vaccine providers.

“Now that the supply of vaccine is significantly increasing, this is the perfect time for a large-scale clinic in Ohio to bolster our work to get shots in arms quickly, efficiently, and equitably. We welcome FEMA to Ohio and are grateful for their support and the support of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, and Cleveland State University as we continue down the road to recovery,” said Governor DeWine. “Ohio has held several successful mass vaccination clinics, but this long-term clinic will reach the most people yet – particularly those in Ohio’s most vulnerable populations and those who face barriers in accessing health care. In addition to this new northeast Ohio site, we remain committed to ensuring that, no matter where you live, a vaccine provider is located nearby, and we’re strengthening that commitment by also launching several new state-sponsored mass vaccination sites in other areas of the state.”

The Wolstein Center Mass Vaccination Clinic will operate seven days a week and will offer first doses of the Pfizer vaccine during the first three weeks of operations. Those vaccinated during that timeframe will be guaranteed a second dose during the fourth, fifth, and sixth weeks of the clinic. The brand of vaccine that will be supplied during the final two weeks of the clinic has not yet been determined.

Any Ohioan who is currently eligible to receive the vaccine under the Ohio Department of Health’s vaccination plan may be vaccinated at the clinic, but focus will be placed on ensuring that high-risk and underserved citizens in northeast Ohio have easy access to appointments. Ohioans will have multiple options for appointment scheduling, including in-person, phone, and online scheduling via Ohio’s forthcoming statewide online scheduling system. State, local, and federal partners will also deploy to high-risk communities that could be disproportionately impacted by the virus to offer information about the vaccine and to help schedule appointments. Hours of operation have not yet been established, and the site is not yet taking reservations, but specific instructions on how to book an appointment will be announced in the coming days.

The Ohio Department of Health, Ohio National Guard, and Ohio Emergency Management Agency will manage the Wolstein Center site with support from FEMA, the U.S. Department of Defense, the City of Cleveland, Cuyahoga County, and Cleveland State University.

“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.”

“I thank President Biden and Governor DeWine for their leadership and commitment to making the availability of COVID-19 vaccines a priority,” said Cleveland Mayor Frank Jackson. “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. We ask that you continue to wear a mask, wash your hands, social distance, and stay home if you can. These preventative measures coupled with the increasing availability of vaccines will help us slow the spread of COVID-19.”

“This is an exciting development for the people of our region. It has been a long, hard road and we aren’t over it yet,” said Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Budish. “We still need to follow all the protocols we know work while we wait for more people to get vaccinated, but I am pleased to say that with this new mass vaccination site, the light at the end of the tunnel just got a lot brighter.”

"We stand front and center with our mayor, county executive, and Governor DeWine in serving our community in this important way,'' said Cleveland State University President Harlan M. Sands. "As Cleveland’s public research institution, providing these critical vaccinations is mission-central for CSU."

To help those who may have difficulty getting transportation to the Wolstein Center, Cuyahoga County will work with the County Council to provide free bus passes through RTA and subsidize ride share services for people who call 2-1-1 and request transport to the Wolstein site for their vaccination appointment. Other forms of transportation will also be provided including transportation through the Senior Transportation Center and local churches.

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

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