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GOVERNOR ANDREW M. CUOMO

**GOVERNOR CUOMO UPDATES NEW YORKERS ON VACCINATION EFFORTS
ACROSS NEW YORK**

***Beginning January 4, All Public Health and Outpatient/Ambulatory Front-Line,
High-Risk Health Care Workers, Home Care and Hospice Workers Providing
Direct In-Person Patient Care Are Eligible to Receive First Dose of Vaccine***

New York to Supplement Federal Nursing Home Vaccination Program

Plans Underway to Secure Resources to Vaccinate General Public

***New 'Am I Eligible App' To Help New Yorkers Determine Their Own Eligibility and
Connect Them with Administration Centers***

***Additional Measures to Hold Providers Accountable for Fraudulence in Vaccine
Distribution Process***

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced the latest prioritization for New Yorkers eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Beginning January 4, eligibility is being expanded to include all outpatient/ambulatory front-line, high-risk health care workers who provide direct in-person patient care, as well as all public health care workers who provide direct in-person care, including those who conduct COVID-19 tests and handle lab specimens. Beginning this week, eligibility will also be expanded to include home care workers, hospice workers, and nursing home and other congregate setting workers who have yet to receive a vaccine through the federal nursing home vaccination program.

"While we're trying to control COVID with one hand, we're trying to defeat it with the other and the vaccine is the weapon that will win this war," **Governor Cuomo said.** "Getting this vaccine out is going to be the single greatest operation government has ever had to accomplish and we're taking bold actions to ensure it is delivered swiftly and equitably for all New Yorkers. Not only are all health care workers - the heroes who have taken care of us throughout this entire pandemic - now eligible to receive their first dose, but we are taking steps to ensure providers expedite vaccinations, resources are in place to vaccinate the general public, and bad actors looking to game the system are held accountable."

Continued Expansion of Eligibility

Under the Department of Health's most recent eligibility guidance, beginning January 4, all Outpatient/Ambulatory front-line, high-risk health care workers of any age who provide direct in-person patient care, or other staff in a position in which they have direct contact with patients will be eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccine. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Individuals who work in private medical practices
- Hospital-affiliated medical practices; public health clinics
- Specialty medical practices of all types
- Dental practices of all types
- Dialysis workers
- Diagnostic and treatment centers
- Occupational therapists
- Physical therapists
- Speech therapists
- Phlebotomists
- Behavioral health workers
- Student health workers

Additionally, all front-line, high-risk public health workers who have direct contact with patients, including individuals who administer COVID-19 tests, handle COVID-19 lab specimens, and those directly engaged in COVID-19 vaccinations are also eligible to receive the vaccine.

Eligibility also expands this week to include home care workers, those in the consumer directed programs, hospice workers, and staff of nursing homes/skilled nursing facilities and other congregate settings who did not receive the COVID-19 vaccination through the Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program.

New Efforts to Expedite Vaccine Delivery and Administration

As part of New York's effort to further expedite the delivery and administration of the COVID-19 vaccine, a number of efforts are now underway.

New 'Am I Eligible?' App

New York State has launched a new 'Am I Eligible ' app to help New Yorkers determine their eligibility, connect them with administration centers, and schedule appointments. To access the app, as well as find the latest information concerning the vaccine and its administration, visit: <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/>.

Supplemental Support for Federal Nursing Home Vaccination Program

Currently, 611 facilities in New York have enrolled in the federal government's Nursing Home Vaccination Program, in which staff and residents receive vaccinations through a partnership with pharmacies like CVS and Walgreens. According to the latest data, 288 facilities - or 47 percent - have completed the first dose for residents. Through state facilitation, 234 more facilities will administer the first dose this week. This will ensure

that 85 percent of facilities have administered the first dose to residents by week's end, with the remaining 15 percent to be completed over the next two weeks.

Planning for Vaccination of General Public

As the state moves closer to the vaccination of the general public, a number of special efforts are now underway to ensure resources are in place to facilitate widespread vaccination, especially in underserved communities. First, the state will establish a number of pop-up vaccination centers to facilitate public vaccinations, similar to the state-run mobile testing centers which were established in the spring. The state is also identifying public facilities and convention centers to also be used as vaccination centers, and is recruiting retired nurses, doctors and pharmacists to support vaccine administrations.

A main focus of these efforts will also be focused on ensuring vaccine access in underserved communities and health care deserts. The state is already in the process of building Community Vaccination Kits to support these efforts and will work with public housing officials, churches and community centers to identify the most appropriate locations for kit deployments.

Each kit includes step-by-step instructions for how to set up a site, and critical supplies and equipment such as:

- Office Supplies
- Workstation Equipment
- Communications Equipment
- Cleaning Supplies
- Lighting Equipment
- PPE
- Crowd/Traffic Control Equipment
- Vials
- Syringes
- Room Dividers
- Privacy Curtains

Ensuring Accountability Within Vaccine Administration Process

The vaccine will only be effective if it is administered quickly and fairly across every corner of the state. To facilitate this, New York State Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker [issued a letter](#) to vaccine providers in recent days outlining the expectations which have been placed on providers to ensure an expedited administration of the vaccine. This included:

- Any provider must use the vaccine inventory currently in hand by the end of week or face a fine up to \$100,000;
- Moving forward, facilities must use all of its vaccine allotment within seven days of receipt;

- Providers who do not comply or are found to be seriously deficient can be subject to more serious sanctions and fines, including being disqualified from future distribution

Additionally, with fraud being a real concern of any operation this size, the Governor is signing an Executive Order stating that if any entity falsifies who or what they are, or if any entity does not follow state guidelines on vaccine eligibility, that provider will be subject to license revocation. The Governor will also be proposing legislation to make these acts criminal moving forward.