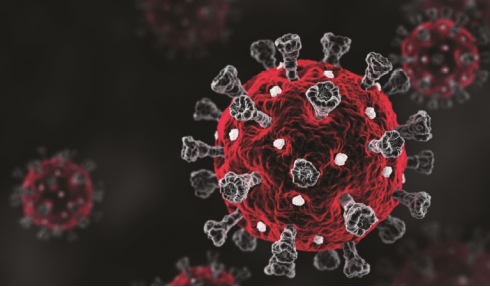


Vax Matters



January 22, 2021



News

Stakeholder Outreach Tops 6,500

New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) Commissioner Judith Persichilli has continued to engage with stakeholders weekly as part of the state's outreach to help build public confidence in the vaccines and the rollout process, as well as to gather important information from stakeholders regarding areas of need.

Since summer, she has engaged with more than 6,500 stakeholders from 90 groups including aging and senior services; interfaith-based organizations, pharmacies, higher education, elected officials, disabilities advocates, unions, healthcare associations, counties and local health departments, law enforcement and first responders.

In addition to providing information about the vaccine distribution process, prioritization phases, and the work of NJDOH's COVID-19 Vaccination Task Force, the Department has gained important insights into issues facing residents served by these groups.

Webinar with Dr. Fisher

The New Jersey Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics is hosting a webinar on the COVID-19 Vaccine Roll Out with the NJDOH's Dr. Meg Fisher at 1 p.m. January 25. [Click here](#) for more information and registration.

With Scarce Vaccine, Options to Find Limited Vaccination Appointments

Vaccines are available to anyone who lives, works or studies in New Jersey, and the state is working to safely and efficiently vaccinate as many eligible people as possible with the very limited doses available to the state.

To date, more than 490,677 doses have been administered including 428,711 first doses. Limited vaccine impacts appointment availability and has prompted questions among those eligible for the vaccine on how to get one.

Who can schedule an appointment:

Vaccine eligibility currently includes healthcare workers in Phase 1A; sworn law enforcement and fire professionals who are the first group in Phase 1B to be included; individuals age 65 and over; and those age 16-64 with certain medical conditions. While people are encouraged to pre-register, there are currently many more people seeking vaccination than there are appointments available and we urge the public to be patient. NJDOH continues to work to improve information on sites and accessibility.

How to pre-register and schedule an appointment:

Option 1: Individuals can pre-register for a vaccination appointment using the New Jersey Vaccine Scheduling System (NJVSS) at covid19.nj.gov/vaccine.

As appointments become available at sites participating in NJVSS, the system will send emails prompting pre-registrants to schedule their first dose. Email notifications will be sent in batches based on recipient eligibility and based on the availability of appointments in the system. The email will contain a link to schedule an appointment with sites using NJVSS, as well as a link to a list of community-based sites that utilize their own scheduling system.

Option 2: Individuals can make appointments online or by phone at open sites listed by county at covid19.nj.gov/vaccine. There are megasites and other community-based sites serving as vaccination points of dispensing that have their own registration systems. Additional sites continue to be added. Two state-supported megasites opened on Friday, bringing the state's total to six – the [Atlantic City Convention Center](#), a collaboration with AtlantiCare, and the [Racetrack at Meadowlands](#), East Rutherford, a partnership with Hackensack Meridian Health.

What if I don't have Internet access or need help registering?

A **vaccination call center** to help individuals navigate the vaccination process opens Monday. (See more on Page 2).

How do I get a second dose appointment?

At this time, vaccine recipients should expect to receive their second dose at the same location where the first dose was received. Vaccination sites should be scheduling the second dose appointment at that time. If an individual hasn't been scheduled for a second appointment, they should contact the site where they were first vaccinated.



State Sen. Troy Singleton gets vaccinated at the Burlington County Megasite at the Moorestown Mall.

COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy: A Q & A With NJDOH's Dr. Meg Fisher

Why should residents feel confident in getting the vaccine? How is it determined to be safe?

The vaccines went through the same process used for all vaccines. There were phase 1, 2 and 3 trials to show that the vaccine was both safe and effective. Thousands of people were vaccinated during these trials. There were many minor side effects like sore arms and aches. There were very few serious side effects. The vaccine trials are ongoing as are the vaccine monitoring safety efforts. Everyone who is vaccinated is encouraged to sign up with the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's V-safe app](#) which enables them to report any side effects after vaccination.

How do you build trust in the vaccine and trust in the process?

The best way to build trust is to talk to those who you trust. Speak with your healthcare provider and talk to them about vaccines in general and about the COVID-19 vaccines in particular.

What are the challenges facing the state in reaching populations hesitant or mistrustful of the vaccine?

We know many people will have questions about these vaccines and we want to encourage people to get the best information available about the vaccines. To do this, we hope people will go to the [NJDOH website](#). The Department is partnering with trusted community members to help share messages on the importance of getting vaccinated. [NJDOH's vaccine website](#) also includes key information in numerous languages. In addition, as part of the state's public awareness campaign, I have joined with other doctors, such as Dr. Eddy Bresnitz, NJDOH Medical Advisor and Professional Advisory Committee Chair; Dr. James Pruden of St. Joseph's University Medical Center; and Dr. Shereef Elnahal, President/CEO of University Hospital; nurses and other healthcare workers in [videos](#) in several languages on the importance of getting vaccinated.

What steps can we take to overcome those challenges?

Health Commissioner Persichilli has been in calls with thousands of stakeholders throughout the state. We are holding multiple educational sessions to help inform the public. The Department's outreach efforts are ongoing.

Do I need both doses to protect myself from COVID-19?

Yes, you need both doses. Although you will have some protection after the first dose, you need the second dose to be fully protected. Two weeks after the second dose, 94% to 95% of people are protected from COVID-19. Even though it is likely you are protected, please continue to wear a mask, physically distance yourself, avoid gatherings, wash your hands and stay home when you are sick.

Resources

A healthcare toolkit of resources is available online on the [NJDOH COVID Vaccine page](#), including:

[FAQs for Healthcare Providers](#)

[Infographic: COVID-19 Vaccine Approval Process](#)

[Myths and Misconceptions about COVID-19 Vaccination](#)

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Resources From CDC

[COVID-19 Vaccination Communication Toolkit for Community-Based Organizations](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccination Communication Toolkit for Essential Workers](#)



Roosevelt Care Center resident Mildred Clements, 103, and nurse Esther Moodey receive their second vaccine shots in Old Bridge as part of the federal pharmacy partnership with long-term care facilities and CVS and Walgreens.

New Jersey Readies Opening of COVID-19 Vaccine Call Center

A vaccine call center to help individuals with the vaccination process opens Monday. The call center – available at **855-568-0545** – will be open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days a week.

Over 250 trained individuals will staff the call center initially with plans to add additional agents to meet call volumes.

The call center will be staffed with a mix of English and Spanish-speaking agents as well as an interpretation service to support Chinese, Portuguese, Tagalog, Italian and other languages prevalent in New Jersey.

With the expansion of eligibility into more categories, there are now many more people who are eligible to get vaccinated but vaccine supply is still very limited.

Staff will be available to answer questions on the registration and scheduling process and can provide information on where to get the vaccine.

Call center staff can pre-register individuals for the vaccine and will be able to assist in scheduling appointments for eligible individuals.

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