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STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Age 55 and above, essential workers, people with certain medical conditions and those who live in multigenerational housing are now eligible to be vaccinated

March 3, 2021 ANCHORAGE – The State of Alaska Vaccine Task Force has today significantly expanded the criteria for who is eligible to receive state-allocated COVID-19 vaccine. Those newly eligible can now sign up for an open vaccine appointment in their community.

If you are not finding an open appointment in the community where you live, please check back regularly for more availability. Thursdays are when most appointments are added to the state system.

Those previously eligible (Phase 1a and 1b) can continue to get immunized against COVID-19 if they have not already done so. This includes most health care workers, people age 65 and above, those living and working in congregate settings, some pandemic response workers and people age 50 and above who have a high-risk medical condition OR work in an essential job around others.

The newly eligible group, Phase 1c, includes:

- Persons aged 55–64 years
- Persons aged 16 and above who:
 - a. Are essential workers as defined by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) OR
 - b. Are “high risk” or “might be high risk” for severe COVID-19 illness according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or their provider OR
 - c. Live in a multigenerational household OR
 - d. Live in “unserved communities”

What qualifies as a medical condition is now expanded in Phase 1c to include anyone who has a medical condition that places a person at “high-risk” or “might be high-risk” for severe illness from COVID-19, according to the [CDC](#), or who is considered high-risk by a person’s medical provider.

Essential workers are those identified under the [CISA definition](#).

A multigenerational household includes with 3 or more generations, or “skipped” generations (e.g., a grandchild living with an elder).

An “unserved community” is defined as a community where many homes lack water and sewer systems [as specifically defined by the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation](#).

Governor Mike Dunleavy applauded the move as a step toward recovery. “Expanding the vaccine eligibility to reach more people is significant in protecting Alaskans and in getting Alaska reopened and our economy back up and thriving,” he said.

This month, the State Vaccine Task Force is expecting 103,120 first doses of Pfizer and Moderna vaccine (this includes state and Indian Health Service vaccine allocations for March plus a February supplemental allocation). Alaska’s vaccine providers will also receive 8,900 doses of the recently authorized one-shot Johnson & Johnson Janssen vaccine over the next two weeks.

In addition, Alaska receives additional federal allocations for the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), Veterans Affairs (VA) and for two programs involving pharmacies and federally qualified health centers.

“We have a good quantity of vaccine in Alaska for March but not enough yet to make it widely available to anyone who wants it,” said Dr. Anne Zink, Alaska’s Chief Medical Officer. “While vaccine supply remains limited, we are offering it to groups who have been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, who are at risk for severe illness or death or who work in essential jobs. Some Alaskans may be more vulnerable to this disease than others due to their unique health or life circumstances. Offering vaccine is one step we can take now to help address these inequities.”

One recent change the State Vaccine Task Force made to the phased allocation was to delete Phase 1b Tier 3 and instead roll the groups delineated in that tier into Phase 1c. The State of Alaska’s allocation guidelines that detail eligibility criteria can be found on the [vaccine eligibility webpage](#).

Alaskans are being asked to screen themselves for eligibility prior to making an appointment. Eventually, as vaccine supply increases, COVID-19 vaccine will be available to anyone who wants it.

In the meantime, please visit covidvax.alaska.gov to check eligibility, use the [Alaska COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Checker](#) and then look for an open appointment if you are eligible. Please call 907-646-3322 if you need assistance. The helpline is staffed Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. and 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. on weekends.

Alaskans may also qualify for vaccine distributed and managed by Alaska’s Tribal health system, or from the VA or the DOD. If you receive services through these providers, contact your local organization to learn more about COVID-19 vaccine eligibility.

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