



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 15, 2020

Department of Health: Seven More Hospitals Receive COVID-19 Vaccine

Harrisburg, PA – The Wolf Administration today announced as of 12 PM, December 15, seven additional hospitals have received a shipment of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine and will begin distributing it to health care workers as outlined in the state’s interim [vaccine distribution plan](#). This brings the total to nine hospitals to date that have received vaccine.

“Each day, hospitals will be shipped vaccine directly from Pfizer and will begin administering it to health care workers at the hospital,” Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine said. “The 87 hospitals receiving shipments this week enrolled to be COVID-19 vaccine providers. The federal government has determined the amount of vaccine and when the vaccine is distributed. Hospitals receiving the Pfizer-BioNtech COVID-19 vaccine must be able to handle the ultra-low temperature storage requirements.”

Hospitals that received vaccine today include:

- Doylestown Hospital, Doylestown, Bucks County;
- Evangelical Community Hospital, Lewisburg, Union County;
- Geisinger Wyoming Valley, Wilkes Barre, Luzerne County;
- Geisinger-Lewistown Hospital, Lewistown, Mifflin County;
- Titusville Area Hospital, Titusville, Crawford County;
- UPMC- Presbyterian Hospital, Pittsburgh, Allegheny County and
- WellSpan Good Samaritan Hospital, Lebanon, Lebanon County.

The initial 97,500 doses have been slated for [87 hospitals](#) across the state identified to receive vaccine directly from Pfizer by Monday, Dec. 21. Philadelphia County Health Department received 13,650 doses and is distributing to hospitals in the county. As additional allocations become available, more hospital sites will receive the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine over the next several weeks. Hospital sites are selected by their ability to manage the cold chain requirement with the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine, completion of the COVID-19 provider agreement, and successful onboarding with the Department of Health for necessary documentation of vaccination. The number of doses, recipient hospitals, and arrival dates are subject to change based on updated information from the federal government and Pfizer.

“These first doses of vaccine are being given specifically to health care workers through hospitals,” Dr. Levine said. “Hospitals are making arrangements to implement these vaccinations, not only to their own frontline staff but to other high-priority recipients. The number of people we can immunize truly depends on how quickly the manufacturers can make the vaccine.”

Pfizer’s COVID-19 vaccine received [Emergency Use Authorization \(EUA\)](#) from the Food and Drug Administration on Friday, December 11, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) approved its use on December 13.

The vaccine will be available in three phases, beginning with critical populations. Due to the limited supply of vaccine, the first phase is expected to take several months. Initial administration of doses will be according to the ACIP recommendations of vaccine administration to health care workers, EMS first responders and residents and staff in congregate care settings.

In the second phase, the department anticipates more vaccine doses will be available. This will allow vaccination of those not vaccinated in the first phase and those essential workers who cannot work remotely and must work in proximity to others. The third phase is vaccinating all persons of any age not previously vaccinated, once the department has a sufficient supply of vaccine. In this phase, the entire population will have access to a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has a [nationwide playbook](#) that the department used to develop and still uses to update the [Pennsylvania COVID-19 Interim Vaccination Plan](#).

More information about the COVID-19 vaccine can be found [here](#).

The Wolf Administration stresses the role Pennsylvanians play in helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19:

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Cover any coughs or sneezes with your elbow, not your hands.
- Clean surfaces frequently.
- Stay home to avoid spreading COVID-19, especially if you are unwell.
- If you must go out, you are required to wear a mask when in a business or where it is difficult to maintain proper social distancing.
- Download the COVID Alert PA app and make your phone part of the fight. The free app can be found in the [Google Play Store](#) and the [Apple App Store](#) by searching for “covid alert pa”.

Updated Coronavirus Links: Press Releases, State Lab Photos, Graphics

- [Daily COVID-19 Report](#)
- [Press releases regarding coronavirus](#)
- [Latest information on the coronavirus](#)
- [Photos of the state's lab in Exton \(for download and use\)](#)
- [Coronavirus and preparedness graphics \(located at the bottom of the page\)](#)
- [Community preparedness and procedures materials](#)

All Pennsylvania residents are encouraged to sign up for AlertPA, a text notification system for health, weather, and other important alerts like COVID-19 updates from commonwealth agencies. Residents can sign up online at www.ready.pa.gov/BeInformed/Signup-For-Alerts.