



Dave Koch, Director

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Johnson County provides COVID-19 vaccine update

Johnson County, Iowa –The past several weeks have marked a new phase in our ability to protect our family, friends and community from COVID-19 infection and severe illness. Many frontline health care providers and long-term care residents and staff in Johnson County have started receiving COVID-19 vaccinations. Johnson County Public Health (JCPH) is currently prioritizing health care workers for vaccination based upon their COVID-19 exposure risk, frequency, immediacy and duration, per the Iowa Department of Public Health Infectious Disease Advisory Committee recommendations.

These health care workers include: ICU health care workers, emergency department health care workers, respiratory therapists, long-term care center employees, emergency medical services providers and those working directly with COVID-19 positive patients. Vaccinations for other health care workers and support staff will be expanded when recommendations are announced by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Iowa Department of Public Health. In addition, JCPH is linking medical offices that are not affiliated with Mercy Iowa City or University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics with agencies to administer the COVID-19 vaccine as supply becomes available. Even though Johnson County is still in phase 1A, plans are in place for vaccine allocation to the next phases/groups. The appropriate relationships and processes have been established to get the vaccine quickly and equitably allocated to our community.

Johnson County residents are fortunate to have many health care, longterm care and assisted living center options. However, this also means there are many people waiting to be vaccinated in the first vaccination phase. Other counties may move through phases faster than Johnson County because they have fewer health care workers to vaccinate. JCPH has attested to this larger proportion of health care workforce to our partners and to the Iowa Department of Public Health and their leadership. JCPH hopes that future allocations to Johnson County will reflect that and that we can continue allocating those doses to our partners who are vaccinating people as safely and efficiently as possible. As the supply of vaccine increases, JCPH will announce when it is your turn through our website, social media, local news media and to our many valued community partners. At this time, individual residents do not need to contact JCPH to register or be added to any listing.

“We are happy to hear so many of our Johnson County residents are interested in receiving the vaccine, but it is important to realize this is going to be a lengthy process,”

A community where all can achieve optimal health.

Sam Jarvis, Community Health Manager for JCPH said. “COVID-19 vaccines are arriving slowly into our state and community at this time with larger quantities more likely to be available in late spring. This means we are expecting to be in Phase 1A throughout the spring. So those who are anticipated to be included in 1B, the next phase (older adults/essential workers), will not start to be vaccinated for several more months.”

Johnson County has been allocated more than 10,000 doses to distribute to qualified COVID-19 vaccine providers since Dec. 14. The vaccine supply being allocated has not been consistent, but as soon as we are able to allocate to providers in our community, the doses are being utilized as quickly as possible and are assigned to persons who are within Iowa’s Infectious Disease Advisory Council’s sub-prioritization.

Until vaccine is widely available to all, it is critical that everyone continues to practice prevention strategies:

- Wear a mask.
- Practice social distancing with those outside of your household.
- Clean your hands frequently with soap and water.
- Stay home if you feel sick.

For information and updates related to COVID-19, visit <https://coronavirus-johnsoncounty.hub.arcgis.com>, <https://idph.iowa.gov/Emerging-Health-Issues/Novel-Coronavirus/Vaccine> and follow JCPH on social media @JClowaPH.

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