



JOINT INFORMATION RELEASE Joint Information Center (JIC)

MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: Dec. 15, 2020
EVENT: Kenosha County Emergency Management COVID-19 Virus
LOCATION: County of Kenosha

The Kenosha County Division of Health is working actively with the Kenosha County Emergency Operations Center, health care providers and other partners to coordinate local distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Local health officials are following up on a planning process that began on the federal level and then moved to state health departments, which are now sharing information with local partners about how implementation will occur.

Initial supplies of the vaccine locally are expected to be scarce, with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services overseeing and determining allocations based on guidance from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and the Wisconsin State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee.

It is not yet known how much vaccine Kenosha County will initially receive or which health care providers will receive supplies during the early rollout.

"I know that the COVID-19 vaccine is a long time coming for many of our residents, and I understand that there are many questions to which we don't yet have answers," said Kenosha County Health Officer Dr. Jen Freiheit. "I ask for the public's patience as we receive and react to federal and state guidance. As always, the Kenosha County Division of Health will be here to serve our health partners and the general public as we round another bend in the pandemic."

Under initial state and federal distribution plans:

- Vaccination distribution will occur in phases starting with 1A, which officially began Monday. Those slated to receive the vaccine in Phase 1A include health care personnel and long-term care facility residents and staff. *Initial vaccine allotments will not be available to the general public during Phase 1A.*
- Those primarily responsible for administering vaccinations in Phase 1A will include hospitals and health care providers (for their health care workers) and pharmacies (for long-term care facility providers and residents). Additionally, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services has issued a request for services for vaccination clinics.



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- The Kenosha County Division of Health will help to fill gaps for Phase 1A vaccine delivery (for emergency medical services, for example) as resources allow. The Division of Health does not expect to receive any vaccine or to vaccinate until January 2021 at the earliest; the exact timing and parameters for distribution are not yet known.

According to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, Phase 1B will include essential workers (still to be defined by the state), while Phase 1C will include people age 65 and older and those with other conditions that put them at higher risk. The timeframe for these phases is not yet known.

The general public will be eligible for vaccination during the subsequent Phases 2 and 3, assuming a sufficient supply of vaccine. The earliest timeline for the general public to receive vaccine, as reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other experts, is the second or third quarter of 2021.

Prior to the vaccine becoming widely available to the public, Freiheit said it remains vital to wear a mask in public, socially distance, avoid gatherings and keep your social circle small, and stay home if sick or quarantined.

"This has been a long ride, but now is not yet the time to ease up on the measures we should be taking to slow the spread and reduce the risks of COVID-19," Freiheit said. "I look forward to sharing more information about vaccine supplies and distribution as it becomes available."

More information about COVID-19, including local data and links to tips and resources, is available on the Kenosha County COVID-19 Response Hub website, at <https://www.kenoshacounty.org/covid-19>.

Together, we can and will slow the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

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