



## JOINT INFORMATION RELEASE Joint Information Center (JIC)

# ***MEDIA RELEASE***

**DATE:** Dec. 30, 2020  
**EVENT:** Kenosha County Emergency Management COVID-19 Virus  
**LOCATION:** County of Kenosha

The Kenosha County Division of Health is now helping to provide the COVID-19 vaccine to frontline health care personnel, with an initial emphasis on emergency medical services workers, Health Officer Dr. Jen Freiheit said today.

Freiheit said Kenosha County is one of eight public health departments in Wisconsin that received supplies of the vaccine this week.

Kenosha County took delivery of 300 doses, many of which have been transferred to the Kenosha Fire Department, which has been trained to vaccinate its emergency medical technicians. Others are being administered to first responders and other first-tier health care workers by county public health nurses.

"We were ready and prepared to receive early supplies of the vaccine, and we're now one of the first health departments in the state to get shots in the arms of frontline health care workers," Freiheit said. "We will continue coordinating the release of the vaccine as quickly as we can receive it. We ask for the public's patience as we mark this important milestone."

Following tiers defined by a state advisory group, individuals who provide direct patient service or engage in health care services that place them into contact with patients who may have COVID-19 are defined as Tier 1a, the only group currently eligible for vaccination.

Vaccine eligibility for subsequent tiers including other population groups and, eventually, the general public, will be announced at future dates, pending federal and state guidance.

"We know many people are very eager to receive the vaccine and, eventually, put COVID-19 behind them," Freiheit said. "Access for future tiers over the coming months will be announced as soon as possible. We ask that people please refrain from calling the Division of Health with questions about vaccine availability, as our staff remains very busy processing a high volume of COVID-19 cases and, now, the limited rollout of the vaccine."

Freiheit said it remains important to continue important precautions to prevent the further spread of COVID-19.



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These measures include:

- Wear a mask when in public, even in outdoor locations (particularly, where social distancing is difficult).
- Do not gather with people outside of your own household. If you must do so, wear a mask and stay at least six feet apart.
- Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds, scrubbing thoroughly and rinsing completely.
- Stay home if you have COVID-19 symptoms and get tested.

Because Tier 1a is limited to direct patient care that is public facing, anyone with the ability to telework is not considered Tier 1a. Those who do not have the ability to work from home — hospital workers, emergency workers, etc. — are being prioritized.

Some of the health care personnel categories in Tier 1a include:

- Certified nursing assistant, nursing assistant, nurse aide, medical assistant, nurses
- Chiropractors
- Dental services, including dentist, dental hygienist, dental assistants
- Direct care personnel — for example, people who provide direct care to patients, including in their homes (e.g.: personal care assistant, home health worker)
- Emergency medical responders (EMR), including emergency medical technician/paramedic
- Environmental services, food and nutrition, buildings-and-grounds in patient care setting
- Hospice workers
- Long-term care facilities staff
- Pharmacist/pharmacist assistant
- Physicians, physician assistant/nurse practitioners
- Transportation services to and from health care settings, for example, testing sites, dialysis centers, ambulatory care

This is not an exhaustive list. For a full description of who is in Tier 1a, see the Wisconsin State Disaster Medical Advisory Committee guidance at <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p02858.pdf>.

*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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