

IREDELL COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Iredell County Health Department

NEWS RELEASE

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COVID-19 Vaccine Availability for Medical Providers and First Responders

Over the last week, the Iredell County Health Department has vaccinated nearly 500 healthcare workers, first responders, and long-term care facilities staff and residents who are at high risk of contracting COVID-19. As we gear up to also offer the COVID-19 vaccination to individuals who are 75 years and older, we want to make the community aware of the very limited availability of this vaccine.

The NC Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS), under the direction of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is making the COVID-19 vaccine available to the community through a phased approach. The intent of this plan is to lessen the negative impact on our local hospitals and medical workforce, as well as provide protection to those most vulnerable to COVID-19 complications, so the vaccine is being offered in the below specific order.

Details regarding the priority groups eligible for vaccination can be found below:

Phase 1a: Health care workers and first responders fighting COVID-19 & Long-Term Care staff and residents.

- Health care workers caring for and working directly with patients with COVID-19, including staff responsible for cleaning and maintenance in those areas
- Health care workers administering vaccine
- Long-term care staff and residents-people in skilled nursing facilities and in adult, family and group homes

Phase 1b: Adults 75 years or older and frontline essential workers.

There is not enough vaccine for everyone in this phase to be vaccinated at the same time. Vaccinations will be available to groups in the following order:

- **Group 1:** Anyone 75 years or older, regardless of health status or living situation
- **Group 2:** Health care workers and frontline essential worker 50 years or older
The CDC defines frontline essential worker as first responders (e.g., firefighters and police officers), corrections officers, food and agricultural workers, U.S. Postal Service workers, manufacturing worker, grocery store workers, public transit workers, and those who work in education sector (teachers and support staff members) as well as child care workers.

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Mooresville, NC 28115
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349 N. Center Street
Statesville, NC 28677
704-878-5305 x3456

- **Group 3:** Health care workers and frontline essential workers of any age

Phase 2: Adults at high risk for exposure and at increased risk of severe illness

Vaccinations will happen by group in the following order:

- **Group 1:** Anyone 65-74 years old, regardless of health status or living situation
- **Group 2:** Anyone 16-64 years old with high-risk medical conditions that increase risk of severe disease from COVID such as cancer, COPD, serious heart conditions, sickle cell disease, Type 2 diabetes, among others, regardless of living situation
- **Group 3:** Anyone who is incarcerated or living in other close group living settings who is not already vaccinated due to age, medical condition or job function.
- **Group 4:** Essential workers not yet vaccinated.
The CDC defines these as workers in transportation and logistics, water and wastewater, food service, shelter and housing (e.g., construction), finance (e.g., bank tellers), information technology and communications, energy, legal, media, and public safety (e.g., engineers), and public health workers.

Phase 3: Students

- College and university students
- K-12 students age 16 and over. Younger children will only be vaccinated when the vaccine is approved for them.

Phase 4: Everyone who wants a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccination.

While we understand the urgency for everyone to receive this important vaccination, we want to remind the community that this vaccine is only available in very limited quantities. We are working diligently to offer this vaccine to those eligible in an effective and efficient manner to first protect health care workers caring for patients with COVID-19, people who are at the highest risk of being hospitalized or dying, and those at high risk of exposure to COVID-19. As more vaccine supply is made available, we will keep the community informed. Please check our website frequently to learn when you are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and where you can receive it as well. Finally, for protection purposes, please continue to wear a mask, wait six feet apart and wash your hands.

Iredell County Health Department COVID-19 Vaccine Information: <https://www.co.iredell.nc.us/1441/COVID-19-Vaccine>

Additional information related to COVID-19 can be found at the following resources:

Specifics on the COVID-19 vaccine: <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/vaccines>

NCDHHS-DPH: www.ncdhhs.gov/covid19

CDC: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html

Iredell County Health Department: <https://nc-iredellcounty.civicplus.com/1383/Coronavirus-COVID-19>

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