

January 4, 2020

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH IN BAY COUNTY TO BEGIN VACCINATING SENIORS AGE 65 AND OLDER AGAINST COVID-19 THIS WEEK
Vaccines are currently allocated to first responders, health care workers and seniors 65 and older



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Panama City, FL— On Tuesday, Jan. 5 the Florida Department of Health in Bay County (DOH-Bay) will start vaccinating seniors aged 65 and older on-site by appointment only at 597 W. 11th St., Panama City. The link to register is bit.ly/bayseniorvaccines. Our daily capacity is 100 appointments per day.

In addition, DOH-Bay will have a mass vaccination event will be from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 9 at the Callaway Arts and Conference Center, located at 500 Callaway Parkway, Callaway, FL. Appointments will be given in 2-hour windows and can be made at bit.ly/bayseniorpod. Seventy-five appointments will be available every two hours.

We will update the public once these appointments are filled and when additional vaccines are received, and more appointments become available.

We encourage people to register online but those without internet access may call (850) 872-4455 to schedule an appointment. Please know that due to high demand our phone lines and website are experiencing technical difficulties. Callers may experience dropped call, busy signals, or be told calls cannot go through.

“We are grateful to have a very limited supply of COVID-19 vaccine for our seniors 65 and older, as it is an important step to help them get back to a more normal way of life,” said Sandon S. Speedling, MHS, CPM, CPH, Administrator and Health Officer, DOH-Bay. “During this pandemic, 74 percent of COVID-19 related deaths were in persons 65 and older. This population also makes up 64 percent of Bay County’s persons hospitalized with COVID-19. We are committed to getting vaccines to our community, but we also request patience as we await additional doses of the vaccine.”

DOH-Bay received 2,000 COVID-19 vaccines with 500 allocated for first responders. The remainder will be provided to frontline health care workers and seniors over 65, as directed by Gov. Ron DeSantis. According to data released by the Food and Drug Administration, the vaccine made by Moderna is highly protective for adults and prevents severe cases of COVID-19.

Consent forms for the Moderna vaccine are available at Bay.FloridaHealth.gov. We encourage those who are making an appointment to review this information, and if you answer ‘yes’ to any of the screening questions, please consult with your healthcare provider first. We also encourage you to print and complete the consent form to bring to your appointment. If you have severe allergic reactions that require you to carry an epi pen, please bring it with you.

COVID-19 Vaccines for Healthcare Providers

DOH-Bay is also working to provide vaccine to frontline healthcare workers who are not affiliated with a hospital. Please complete the [COVID-19 Vaccine Planning Survey](#) if you are not receiving the vaccine from a parent company or hospital. You will want to coordinate appropriately within your practice to ensure there is only one reply per organization.

COVID-19 Vaccine General Information

While the COVID-19 vaccine is a monumental step toward getting this disease under control in Florida, the department continues to encourage common-sense precautions against the spread of the virus, including frequent hand washing, wearing face masks, maintaining six feet of social distancing, and staying home when sick.

A total of 844 Bay County residents have received their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine. As additional vaccine supplies become available and the State provides priority groups for vaccinating, DOH-Bay will follow and share those plans on our website at Bay.FloridaHealth.gov and through text alerts available by texting BayHealth to 888777. For the most current information on COVID-19 vaccination plans in Florida, please visit <https://floridahealthcovid19.gov/covid-19-vaccines-in-florida/>.

COVID-19 Testing

To reach maximum capacity for COVID-19 vaccination, DOH-Bay is temporarily suspending testing for COVID-19. If you need a COVID-19 test, please check with your healthcare provider first. Please visit Bay.FloridaHealth.gov for testing options or see the information below on testing provided by Bay County.

Bay County Testing by Walk On

Lynn Haven Sports Park, 2201 Recreation Drive

Panama City Sports Park, 50 Chip Seal Parkway (New location beginning Monday, November 23)

Hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. and Tuesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Criteria: Testing is available to adults over 18 and children ages 5 and up who are accompanied by an adult.

Cost: Free

Test Type: Antigen (rapid in 20 minutes) and PCR

Appointment required. To make an appointment, visit BayHealthCOVID19.com.

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About the Florida Department of Health

The Department, nationally accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board, works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts. Follow us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter at @HealthyFla. For more information about the Florida Department of Health, please visit www.FloridaHealth.gov.