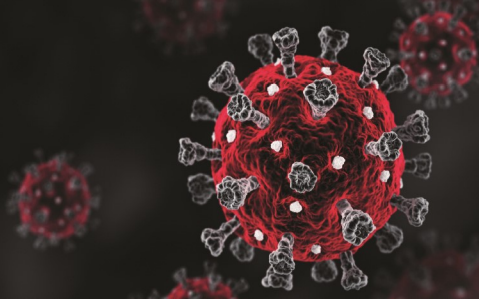


# Vax Matters



March 12, 2021



## News

### COVID Community Corps Training Begins

As part of the Health Department's Vulnerable Populations Plan, several hundred community health workers will begin work to increase vaccination rates in underserved communities through targeted outreach and education. The COVID Community Corps are diverse volunteers from all walks of life including students, caretakers and frontline workers.

So far, over 300 members have received remote training on COVID-19 vaccination registration online and through the call center, and more. Outreach will be virtual through social media and other efforts as well as eventual in-person activity. Interested volunteers should contact Nayeli Salazar, [Nayeli.Salazar@doh.nj.gov](mailto:Nayeli.Salazar@doh.nj.gov).

### Call Center Resumes Vaccine Appointment Scheduling

The New Jersey Vaccine Call Center has fully resumed scheduling appointments. The hotline – 1-855-568-0545 – is open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. every day and can help callers in more than 240 different languages.

Agents are also available to register individuals in the New Jersey Vaccine Scheduling System, answer questions about the vaccine, and provide contact information for sites. To date, the call center has registered 32,000 individuals and has made 12,000 appointments.

### Commissioner On Rutgers Podcast

Health Commissioner Persichilli joined former state Health Commissioner Mary O'Dowd, Executive Director of Health Systems and Population Health Integration at Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences, for an *On The Pandemic* podcast. [Listen here.](#)

## Federal Program to Expand Vaccines at Community Health Centers

President Biden has directed states to make all adults eligible for the vaccine by May 1, and as part of his announcement, will expand vaccines to community health centers in underserved communities.

The Biden administration said it will deliver vaccines directly to up to an additional 700 community health centers nationwide over the next six weeks, increasing the total number of participating community health centers to 950.

Under the original phase of the program, which started this month, four federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) in New Jersey with multiple site locations are to receive an initial additional 2,600 doses through a direct allocation.

These sites include: North Hudson Community Action Corporation, based in Union City; Henry J. Austin Health Center, based in Trenton; Zufall Health Center, based in Dover; and CompleteCare Health Network (Community Health Care, Inc.), based in Bridgeton.

New Jersey's network of 23 FQHCs with 136 licensed sites provide primary care services to individuals who are uninsured, underinsured or undocumented.

These health centers are vital to vaccinating underserved residents in our state, and are community-based and accessible by public transportation.

"The federal allocation of additional doses to the community health centers aligns with our continued commitment to the strategic aim of equity in vaccine distribution," said New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) Commissioner Judith Persichilli.

Over 50 FQHC sites are already vaccinating the state's vulnerable populations.

Vaccinations continue to rise across the state with 2,823,731 total doses administered overall. At the state's mega-sites, nearly 578,000 total doses have been administered.

The number of vaccination sites statewide has grown to approximately 500.



*The CHEMED Health Center vaccination site in Lakewood, visited by Governor Murphy and Commissioner Persichilli on Friday, is one of over 50 FQHC sites already vaccinating vulnerable residents. (Pool photo: Thomas P. Costello, Asbury Park Press)*

### Vaccination Progress

- ◆ 2.8M+ total vaccine doses administered
- ◆ 1.8M+ first doses administered
- ◆ 977,000+ people fully vaccinated (includes J&J)



## Vaccine Eligibility To Expand Again on Monday

Vaccinations for pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade educators and child care workers began last week, and new groups are set to become eligible on Monday.

Governor Murphy, Health Commissioner Persichilli, Senate President Steve Sweeney and Acting Education Commissioner Dr. Angelica Allen-McMillan joined other officials at the Gloucester County mega-site at the Rowan College of South Jersey to mark the start of vaccinations for educators.

"The more people we get vaccinated, the more we put this virus underground," said Commissioner Persichilli. "With COVID-19 vaccine distribution underway, a brighter future – not only for all of us, but most importantly a brighter future for our kids is on the horizon."

Last week, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued a directive that all states immediately make eligible teachers, school staff, and childcare workers for COVID-19 vaccination across all vaccination providers.

On Monday, eligibility will expand to add public and local transportation workers, including bus, taxi, rideshare and airport employees, NJ Transit workers and Motor Vehicle Commissioner staff; public safety workers not previously eligible; migrant farm workers; members of tribal communities; individuals experiencing homelessness and those living in shelters, including domestic violence shelters; and



*Governor Murphy visited the Gloucester County mega-site last Saturday as vaccinations for educators got underway.*

individuals ages 16-64 with additional high-risk medical conditions.

**Related:** [Federal Retail Pharmacy Program – Teachers, School Staff and Childcare Workers: FAQs](#)

## Partnership Sites Opening in Vineland, Orange

The state's community-based vaccination partnership expands next week to Vineland and Orange as vaccinations continue for a second week in Camden and Jersey City and wrap up in Paterson.

To date, the partnership has administered over 15,800 doses overall as of Friday morning.

The 10 sites, which also include the upcoming cities of Newark and Pleasantville and completed sites in Somerset, Trenton and Elizabeth, will vaccinate over 34,000 residents in total.

Vaccinations at each site take place over two weeks, followed by a return visit for second doses.

"We have been focused on bringing resources to underserved communities—because we recognize that the same long-standing inequities that have contributed to health disparities affecting racial and ethnic groups have also put them at increased risk for COVID-19," said Commissioner Persichilli.

The sites are supported through a partnership by the New Jersey Department of Health, New Jersey Office of Emergency Management, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and U.S. Department of Defense, in addition to local faith leaders, nonprofit organizations, local officials, and health departments.



*People line up outside the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist community-based vaccination partnership site in Paterson on Tuesday.*

Appointments are required for the sites and will be handled directly through partnering houses of worship, community organizations, and local community leaders.

Vineland's site will be at 631 E. Landis Ave., while the Orange site will be at St. Matthew AME Church on Oakwood Avenue.

### Resources

NJ Vaccine Call Center: 855-568-0545

[COVID-19 Information Hub](#)

[Community-Based Vaccination Sites](#)

[NJDOH COVID-19 Vaccination Page](#)

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