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Demand for COVID-19 vaccine is high and doses extremely limited

There are 2.4 million residents in Riverside County, including approximately 343,000 seniors aged 65 or older. The estimate for the number of people currently eligible to receive the vaccine in Riverside County is in excess of 700,000.

Yet, Riverside County has only received 114,000 doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. Nearly 80 percent of those doses have gone to state-approved providers, including hospitals, physicians, clinics and pharmacies to vaccinate workers and residents within the current tiers. Shipments are usually received weekly and either distributed to providers or administered at a public health vaccine clinic in 2-3 days.

“This is not a volunteer issue. This is not a venue issue. This is a vaccine issue,” said Board Chair Karen Spiegel, Second District Supervisor. “We’ve had plans in place for mass distribution for some time. Plans and places are not the concern. We do not have enough vaccine available to meet the demand.”

The demand is so great that when thousands of vaccine clinic appointments were opened Wednesday and Friday of this week, all available timeslots on all days were completely booked within two hours. More than 5,600 appointments were booked on Wednesday and another 11,000 booked Friday. Clinic appointments are currently booked until Friday, Jan. 22.

There are more than 175 state-approved vaccine providers in Riverside County. Residents should ask their doctor, urgent care or pharmacy if they are an approved provider and when

they expect to have vaccine. To see a complete list of all providers in Riverside County, including where the doses have been allocated, visit www.ruhealth.org/covid-19-vaccine.

“This is a time when we need to work together and not direct focus to areas that are not the problem,” said V. Manuel Perez, Fourth District Supervisor. “This is a supply and demand problem. We continue to seek help from our federal and state partners to increase the amount of vaccine we receive here in Riverside County. I especially want to thank all the nonprofits, including the Desert Healthcare Foundation, the growers and our community partners for their support.”

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