April 5, 2021

Riverside County to expand eligibility to those 16 and older for COVID-19 vaccination

Teenagers 16 and 17 years old must be accompanied by parent or legal guardian to get immunization

Riverside County health officials are expanding the eligibility for those who want to get vaccinated at the four county-run clinics to those 16 and older, effective Tuesday (April 6).

The change will open vaccine eligibility to hundreds of thousands of Riverside County residents.

"The expansion of eligibility will allow the last large group of Riverside County adult residents to get vaccinated, and bring us one step closer to herd immunity," said Kim Saruwatari, director of Riverside University Health System-Public Health. "Bringing the vaccine to a younger population, where we have seen an increase in cases, is a big step forward."

Those who are 16 and 17 – who are eligible for the Pfizer vaccine – will need to be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian to get vaccinated. Moderna and the Johnson & Johnson vaccine are available to those who are 18 years and older.

"More vaccine is available now, and opening eligibility will move us even further towards our goal of vaccinating the majority of our residents," said Board Chair Karen Spiegel, Second District Supervisor. "Vaccine works best when the majority of the population takes it."

More than one million vaccinations – both first and second doses -- have been administered to Riverside County residents through the county-run clinics and those operated by the nearly 200 community providers. The county-run clinics are located at the Albert A. Chatigny Sr. Community Recreation Center in Beaumont, Heritage High School in Menifee, Tahquitz High School in Hemet and the Moreno Valley Mall. There are also clinics at six community health centers operated by Riverside University Health System that are allowing those 16 and older to be vaccinated.

To make an appointment, click www.rivcoph.org/covid-19-vaccine. Those needing assistance making an appointment can call 2-1-1. The current wait times for 2-1-1 are under five minutes.

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