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Riverside County health officials expand vaccine eligibility to those with underlying health illness

More occupations now added to those eligible for vaccine, doses limited

Those 16 to 64 years old with certain underlying health conditions will now be able to get vaccinated against COVID-19 as Riverside County health officials expand the eligibility criteria, effective today. With hundreds of thousands of residents newly eligible for vaccine, county officials remind the community that supply of vaccine continues to be limited.

Those who make appointments will be asked during the onsite screening whether they have any of the listed illnesses. Individuals will be vaccinated if they answer in the affirmative. No doctor's note or medical record is required to be eligible. The health conditions include **cancer, chronic kidney disease, chronic pulmonary disease, Down syndrome, pregnancy, sickle cell disease, heart condition (excluding hypertension), severe obesity, Type 2 diabetes mellitus or have an immunocompromised state from a solid organ transplant.**

"Many of our residents with underlying health conditions have been patiently waiting to get their shot," said Board Chair Karen Spiegel, Second District Supervisor. "We're appreciative that we can now protect this vulnerable population from COVID-19. Getting vaccinated is an important way to stay healthy and recover from this pandemic."

In addition, the list of occupations that now qualify to be vaccinated has expanded to include janitors, couriers who handle vaccine supplies and emergency supplies, massage therapists, those who work in foster care, utility workers, social workers, homeless shelter workers, library staff and public transit workers. For a complete list of professions who are eligible to be vaccinated, visit www.rivcoph.org/covid-19-vaccine.

"By expanding the eligibility to include those with certain underlying health conditions and new job categories, the number of those who can now be vaccinated has grown by hundreds of thousands," said Kim Saruwatari, director of Public Health. "We are well on the way to vaccinating everyone in Riverside County who wants to be vaccinated."

Riverside County has administered more than 620,000 vaccines between the county-operated clinics and those operated by community providers. The vaccines available in Riverside County are from Moderna, Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson.

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