



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Putnam County prepares for Phase 1B Vaccine Rollout

The Putnam County Health Department and the Putnam County EMA are coordinating efforts to provide the COVID-19 vaccine for Putnam County. The statewide goals for Phase 1B of vaccinations are to save lives of the most vulnerable residents and to keep kids in school. Unfortunately, because vaccines are a scarce resource right now, it will take some time to provide vaccine to those that want it.

The first clinic for Phase 1B of the vaccine plan offered by the PCHD will be held on Wednesday, January 20th. This clinic is for those **age 80 years and older only**. Due to the limited amount of vaccine we will be receiving, this clinic is **BY APPOINTMENT ONLY**. **Walk-ins will not be allowed** and will be turned away at the door. The Putnam County Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers and Putnam County EMA staff have been calling those in the first group (age 80 and over) who are on the vaccine waiting list. If you are on the list, please be patient and you will be contacted as soon as possible for an appointment. More information about location and time of appointment will be provided at that time.

If you are not yet on the vaccine waiting list, please call the Putnam County COVID-19 Vaccine Line (**419-538-7001**). The call line is staffed by volunteers Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. **Please note**, the call line will be closed on Monday, January 18th and will reopen on Tuesday, January 19th.

“The health department has years of experience in providing vaccine to the community, including annual influenza clinics. While this will likely be on a much larger scale, we have been planning and preparing for years for such an event,” stated Kim Rieman, Putnam County Health Department’s Health Commissioner. Mike Klear, Putnam County EMA Director added, “The Putnam County EMA has been working with the health department throughout the pandemic. We are fortunate to have great partnerships in our county so that we can serve our community. Together we are ready to lead this effort and provide the vaccine in our community.”

Vaccines will also be offered by Mercy Health at the Putnam County Medical Center. They are also following state protocols, beginning with patients age 80 and older. To schedule an appointment, please call **419-996-5000** or if you are an established Mercy Health patient you can call your provider to schedule.

In alignment with the state of Ohio’s plan, vaccinations in Phase 1B will begin the week of January 19 in most parts of Ohio. Governor DeWine announced a tiered system for offering

vaccinations to the estimated 2.2 million people who are eligible for the vaccine under this phase, beginning with those who are 80 or older:

- The week of Jan. 19: Ohioans 80 years of age and older.
- The week of Jan. 25: Ohioans 75 years of age and older; those with severe congenital or developmental disorders.
- The week of Feb. 1: Ohioans 70 years of age and older; employees of K-12 schools that wish to remain or return to in-person or hybrid models.
- The week of Feb. 8: Ohioans 65 years of age and older.

When a new age group begins, vaccinations may not be complete for the previous age group. Because the amount of vaccine provided to Ohio counties are expected to be in the hundreds, not thousands, it may take a number of weeks to distribute vaccine to those in Phase 1B. Each Tuesday, the federal government will inform Ohio of its statewide vaccine allocation. Ohio will then notify the providers of how many doses of vaccine they will be receiving the following week.

“Because we will have short notice of the number of vaccine doses we are expected to receive, we will need to be very flexible in our planning for vaccination clinics. We know many people are very eager to receive the vaccine, but we ask for patience and understanding as we prepare to get the vaccine into the arms those in the 1B group,” said Rieman. “As more vaccine becomes available, we will be able to offer more clinics to address the need in our community.”

For more information, visit the Putnam County Health Department website at www.putnamhealth.com or follow the PCHD on Facebook.

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