



Pamlico County Health Department

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Attention: Pamlico County Residents

Where is the Vaccine?

On December 22, 2020, the Pamlico County Health Department received its first 100 doses of the COVID-19 Vaccine. Since that time, an additional 300 doses of the vaccine have been received, and 400 doses have been administered to Pamlico County residents.

NC Department of Public Health receives its extremely limited supply of vaccine from the federal government. Currently, demand for the COVID-19 vaccine far outnumbers the state's limited supply. Each week, the health department is notified regarding how many doses of the vaccine it will receive the following week. This amount fluctuates weekly depending on the supply and demand of the vaccine, as well as how many doses were administered in the preceding weeks. The health department will now begin to receive vaccines for initial doses as well as for citizens requiring their 2nd doses.

Because supplies are so limited, very few private practices throughout the state can give the vaccine at all. Currently, in Pamlico County, PCHD is the only recognized agency that has been given authority by the state to administer any COVID-19 Vaccinations. This makes the planning element extremely crucial when it comes to vaccinating the public at large. Pamlico County Health Department must follow N.C.'s State Guidelines when administering this vaccine in accordance with the Phases provided. You can locate information regarding each of the Phases by going to the following webpage:

<https://files.nc.gov/covid/documents/COVID19-Vaccine-101-Deck-Final.pdf>

Recommendations for "Phase Classifications" may change often as we move through the vaccination period. These changes are instituted by NC Public Health. Currently able to vaccinate those in: **Phase 1a** and **Phase 1b-Group 1**.

We have received numerous questions asking, "Why can't I get a hold of the health department on the phone?" The county health department and county management office have received many complaints concerning this issue. Currently, PCHD has only three incoming phone lines which our staff are working hard to answer so they can set up appointments and answer questions regarding the new vaccine.

To help increase access to appointments the county will soon be adding 8 more phone lines to help reduce this burden. This is currently in the works and will go live within days. At that point, when

individuals call in, an automated system will instruct them on what information is needed, and a message can be left. This information will then be uploaded by our staff to the State's COVID Management System; and within 24 hours, those individuals will receive emailed instructions regarding how to sign up for their vaccine. You must complete your registration on the state's website. After you register on the state's site, another notification will be sent to you. This email from the state, will clarify what "Phase" you are classified in. If your classification is for the current vaccination Phase, you will be instructed to call PCHD and make an appointment. Currently, Pamlico Health Department is scheduling appointments three weeks out. Waiting time will vary according to the amount of vaccine we receive and have on hand.

To register for your COVID-19 Vaccination, follow all of the step-by-step directions listed below:

- Submit your information by email to: c19vac@pamlicocounty.org.
- **Or** by phone at: 252-745-5111

(Please be patient if you receive a busy signal or are put on hold. Additional phone lines are coming soon.)

1. The state needs the following information to begin the registration process:
 - a. Your First and Last Name
 - b. Your date of birth (Please spell out the month, for example: April 19, 1945)
 - c. Your valid email address that has not been used to enroll anyone else for the vaccine.

(Note: you **cannot use a shared email account**; each individual must use a separate email address)

2. PCHD will submit your initial information to the state on the day it is received.
3. You will receive an emailed notification from NCDHHS with a link that will direct you to complete a registration form. Be sure to complete every question. Missed/Unanswered questions may further delay your registration.
4. Within a short time -typically within a day- you will receive another email from NCDHHS regarding which Phase you have been classified into for your vaccination.
 - a. If you are in Phase 1b, you will then call the Health Department to schedule an appointment for your vaccine.
 - b. If you are in a later Phase, you should wait to call the Health Department until that Phase is open for vaccination.
 - c. Once those eligible for Phase 1b are vaccinated, the health department will notify the public about Phase 2, regarding who is included, how-to pre-register, and if there are changes in the process. (We will do this for each phase as the state allows.)

Remember, the vaccine supply is extremely limited. We are following all state guidelines to stay within the current Vaccination Phase. **Everyone who wants a vaccine will get a vaccine.** The bigger question is when? As the vaccine supply becomes more readily available, wait times will be reduced. We thank you for your continued support and wish you all a safe and happy new year.