



# NEWS

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**Feb. 11, 2021**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **County Moves to Expand COVID-19 Vaccinations To Eligible Essential Workers**

*With vaccine supply limited, County continues efforts and partnerships with providers to immunize health care workers and seniors*

**Redwood City** – The County of San Mateo beginning February 22 will expand COVID-19 vaccinations to teachers and child care providers, first responders and food and agricultural workers who are eligible under the [state's Phase 1B](#) as supply allows.

“People are understandably clamoring for the vaccine, and we need to move as swiftly as possible to make that happen as soon as possible,” said San Mateo County Supervisor Carole Groom. “We must do everything we can under the constraints we have to limit the enormity of the pandemic as COVID-19 continues to ravage our community.”

Following the state’s tier system, the County in partnership with private providers has focused on immunizing health care workers, residents of long-term care facilities and seniors since the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines became available in December. As of this week a third of seniors ages 65 and older in San Mateo County have received the first dose of vaccine.

This effort will expand on February 22 to include eligible essential workers such as educators, child care providers, law and enforcement and food and agricultural workers, which includes certain grocery store employees, as limited vaccine supply allows.

“Getting vaccines into the arms of San Mateo County residents is our highest and most urgent priority,” said County Supervisor Dave Pine, who along with Groom serves on a Board COVID-19 subcommittee. “While we are doing everything possible to ensure everyone who is eligible for the vaccine receives one, we are facing serious supply limitations that complicate our efforts. We ask for patience and understanding in these very trying times.”

Waiting until February 22 to expand eligibility allows the County and partners to continue to focus on vaccinating health care workers and residents 65 and over who are at greatest risk of death from the coronavirus. More than 8 out of 10 of the 447 deaths in San Mateo – 84 percent – are individuals who were 65 or older.

The County, through San Mateo County Health and the County-run San Mateo Medical Center, works closely with private health care providers, community-based organizations and other partners to vaccinate eligible residents.

As vaccine supply allows, the County on February 22 will provide pathways to immunization for newly eligible residents who are unable to access the vaccine through their usual health care provider.

The County is working with organizations representing educators, child care workers, law enforcement, and restaurant and agricultural workers to support vaccination plans that are based on an [equity framework](#). The County will encourage local health care providers to vaccinate priority populations in low-income neighborhoods whenever possible before opening appointments to the broader eligible population.

A total of 84,783 individuals (out of the county population of approximately 780,000) have received a first dose of vaccine as of Sunday. Nearly 20,000 have completed the two-dose vaccine series.

“We need to swiftly vaccinate as many people as we possibly can and this includes essential workers,” Board President David J. Canepa said. “We need to focus on ending COVID 24/7 so that we can stimulate the economy and start to return to normal.”

### **Sign Up for Vaccine Eligibility Alerts**

While COVID-19 vaccine supply remains limited, residents can sign up for the [County’s notification tool](#) to receive alerts when the state makes them eligible and information about how you may get an appointment.

For eligible residents, completing the form also adds them to an outreach list for available vaccine appointments at County-sponsored vaccination sites (this form, however, does not replace any signup or appointment mechanism offered by other providers in San Mateo County).

### **Testing Widely Available in San Mateo County**

Testing for COVID-19 is widely available across San Mateo County, including a newly opened dedicated site at the College of San Mateo.

The County of San Mateo offers no-cost testing for everyone who lives or works in the county – regardless of symptoms.

Drive-through testing for adults and children is available at locations in North Fair Oaks, San Bruno, Daly City and East Palo Alto, in addition to the College of San Mateo.

For details and to make an appointment, visit the [County's testing site](#). Note days and times as well as ages of eligible children vary by location. The site also includes a link to a State of California searchable map of testing locations.

**And remember:**

To protect yourself, follow these recommendations:

- Wear a mask over your nose and mouth
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others
- Avoid crowds
- Avoid poorly ventilated spaces
- Wash your hands often

Get more information about these and other steps you can take to [protect yourself and others from COVID-19](#).

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