

Frontline News

1199 MEMBERS ON THE FRONT LINES OF THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19



A MESSAGE FROM DR. VAN DUNN, CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER OF THE 1199 NATIONAL BENEFITS FUND

As you know, healthcare workers are at an increased risk of contracting the virus and unknowingly passing it along. We know it has been especially challenging to protect yourself and your family as flu season and the surge in the ongoing pandemic have collided, creating the potential for a “twindemic” that threatens to pressure our already stressed healthcare system. So, in the same way I encourage you to get your flu shot every year, I encourage you to get the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available to you. We know that many of you have questions about the COVID-19 vaccinations. To help you sort fact from fiction we have created a COVID-19 FAQ that you can access by clicking the link in this newsletter.

Our FAQ addresses common concerns, like whether the vaccine can give you the virus (It can't.), whether you may experience side effects (You may.), and whether you should continue to wear masks and social distance after you are vaccinated. (You should.) If you have other questions that aren't included in our FAQ, please email them to VaccineQuestions@1199.org. We have also heard from some of you that you are concerned about the safety of the vaccines because they were produced so quickly. The rapid development was due to improved efficiencies. Like the flu shot, all vaccinations must go through extensive testing and clinical trials to prove their efficacy and safety before they are approved for use. We encourage you to learn as much as you can about the vaccine and its development. The Union has been conducting Tele-Town Halls and hosting webinars to answer your questions and provide forums for discussion. In the meantime, please be assured that the Union is here for you and will do our best to provide you with up-to-date information as it becomes available.

COVID-19 FAQs / LINKS / INFO

FAQs compiled and updated regularly by 1199's Benefit Fund and the first place to go for questions about the Covid-19 vaccine, where to get it, and other concerns.

<https://www.1199seiu.org/covid19vaccineresources>

Other questions about the COVID-19 vaccine?

Email VaccineQuestions@1199.org



MEMBER VOICES

Jaqueline Lord from Workmen's Circle MultiCare Center in the Bronx tells us why she felt it was important to get vaccinated.

<https://www.1199seiu.org/covid19vaccineresources>

HOMECARE WORKERS BEGIN VACCINATIONS Because of supply shortages, most states prioritized high-risk healthcare workers in congregate settings such as hospitals and nursing homes. As vaccine supplies increase, states are beginning to allow homecare workers to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. In **New York**, home care workers can receive vaccinations at enrolled vaccine providers including hospitals, clinics, urgent care centers and local health departments. Employers are assisting with scheduling and all homecare workers can use either the New York City Vaccine Locator or the New York State COVID-19 Vaccine Form to schedule appointments.

<https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-vaccine-locations.page>

<https://forms.ny.gov/s3/vaccine>

In **Massachusetts**, the process is taking longer. PCAs (and other homecare workers) will begin receiving vaccinations in early February. Vaccinations will take place in hospitals and mass vaccination sites. The Union will share more information as it becomes available.

VACCINATION RATES ARE PICKING UP The race to defeat COVID-19 is nearing completion of the first month of vaccinations across the country. The past week saw a significant increase in the pace of vaccinations and expansion of who is eligible for the vaccine.

- In the past week, the number of hospital workers, health clinic employees, nursing home workers, and nursing home residents have received their first vaccination in **New York** more than doubled with over 511,000 hospital workers and 94,000 nursing home workers receiving the vaccine. New York State Gov. Andrew Cuomo has expanded the eligibility for vaccinations to include more essential workers and seniors over 75.
- **Massachusetts** has provided the first shot to over 197,000 healthcare workers with direct exposure to the virus.
- **New Jersey** is vaccinating high-risk healthcare workers and long-term care residents and has provided over 220,000 shots. The state will be expanding vaccinations to other healthcare and essential workers.
- **Florida** has administered over 633,000 vaccinations to residents and staff at nursing homes, and other front-line healthcare workers at risk of exposure to COVID-19. Florida has also opened vaccinations to seniors 65 and older.
- **Maryland** has one of the highest rates of vaccination rates for healthcare workers, first responders, and seniors in congregate settings, with over 34% receiving their first shot.
- In the **District of Columbia**, nearly 30,000 hospital staff, front-line health-care personnel, emergency services providers, and long-term and home health-care workers received their first dose of vaccine.
- States are below pace required to meet initial vaccination goals and there are complaints of unused vaccine going to waste. Governors are responding by expanding eligibility to include seniors, more essential workers and healthcare workers who are not in high priority groups. 1199 members must lead the way with the vaccine and set an example for others in the community.