

# Frontline News

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



## YOU ARE ALL TRULY HEROES

### A MESSAGE FROM 1199 EVP RUTH HELLER

Hello 1199 Family. I am very excited to report that last week I received my first vaccination. The process could not have been easier. The staff were fantastic, and I feel fine. I'm thrilled to be part of our increasing vaccination numbers in Upstate/Western New York State. Also, in our region (as across the country) case numbers, hospitalizations, and death tolls are continuing to decline. This, by any measure, is largely because of you and your work. For the last year, you have stood fast as our guardians, putting your own lives on the line to get the country through this pandemic. And now you are doing even more—in addition to your caregiving work, you are educating your co-workers, friends, and neighbors about COVID-19 vaccines and the importance of vaccinations. During this pandemic, you are changing the course of

history and public health policy. Doubtless, we have a long way to go, but your leadership and dedication are opening the door to real progress around some of our most stubborn and protracted inequities. As you save lives, you are making lasting change in our communities. Though it saddens me that it took a pandemic for the world to recognize the contributions of our caregivers, I'm very proud of the 1199 members in Upstate/Western New York and throughout our Union. You are all truly heroes. Our country and the world owe you an incalculable debt of gratitude.

## VACCINATION PACE CONTINUES TO INCREASE

Since President Biden's inauguration on January 20, the average number of daily vaccinations has increased fourfold to over 2.5 million doses. Since vaccine distribution began in the U.S. on Dec. 14, more than 110 million doses have been administered, reaching 21.7% of the total U.S. population, according to federal data

**Make your appointment to get vaccinated today!**

collected by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The big question is when will most people be vaccinated so we can return to doing many of the activities we have put on hold for over a year? Experts estimate that 70 to

90 percent of the population needs to acquire resistance to the coronavirus to reach "herd" immunity, when transmission of the virus substantially slows because enough people are protected. If we keep up the current vaccination pace, about half of the total population would be at least partially vaccinated around mid-May. Assuming supply pledges are met, and vaccines are eventually available to children, nearly all-around early August. Every week the number of us vaccinated increases. We are making great progress and we can't let up. Make your appointment to get vaccinated today!

### 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://1199seiu.org/covid19vaccineresources>

Other questions about the COVID-19 vaccine?  
Email [VaccineQuestions@1199.org](mailto:VaccineQuestions@1199.org)

## OVERALL VACCINATION RATES ARE RISING; STATES STILL NEED TO IMPROVE IN MINORITY COMMUNITIES

We know that COVID-19 had a more severe impact on minority groups. And both President Biden and New York Governor Andrew Cuomo pledged to prioritize communities of color and low-income population for vaccinations. Yet, vaccination rates are falling behind in these communities. Nationally, there is a consistent pattern of Black and Hispanic people receiving smaller shares of vaccinations when compared to when compares to the number of cases and deaths among the population. And specifically, their share as a percentage of the total population. In New York, African Americans are 17.3 % of the population but only 9.7% have received at least one vaccine shot. Hispanic or Latino New Yorkers are 18% of the population but only 11.3 % have been vaccinated. We need to do better. States must prioritize low-income and communities of color for the vaccine. We must also encourage our co-workers, friends, and family who are eligible to get the shot.

### COVID-19 QUESTION OF THE WEEK

**Q:** *How is the Johnson & Johnson vaccine different from the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines?*

**A:** The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is the first one-shot regimen. It contains cold viruses that have been genetically tweaked so that they cannot make copies of themselves. When those harmless cold viruses infect cells, they deliver the genetic blueprint of the coronavirus spike protein, and the cell learns to build the spike. The immune system learns to recognize and block the real virus.

