

# ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## *NEWS RELEASE*

COVID-19 vaccine remains limited, continued patience is urged as demand is great

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The Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) knows that many Alabamians are ready to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and appreciates the patience of all citizens during this time. The demand for COVID-19 vaccine continues to exceed supply as Alabama has more than 326,000 healthcare workers and nearly 350,000 people who qualify for a vaccine because they are 75 years old and older. Priority access to vaccine cannot be granted to other groups of people as ADPH follows the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) for the allocation of this limited supply.

While trying to address the needs of Alabamians in the currently identified groups, ADPH is working to improve COVID-19 vaccine scheduling capabilities by creating an online registration portal in addition to its toll-free hotline. On January 8, ADPH announced that appointments are being taken for specified groups to receive COVID-19 vaccine at county health departments beginning January 18 through a statewide COVID-19 Vaccine Scheduling Hotline.

The hotline continues to receive a massive volume of calls, with more than 1.1 million calls received in its first day of operation. ADPH asks the public not to call this appointment line to schedule a vaccine UNLESS they are in an eligible group – healthcare workers, people age 75 and older, law enforcement officers or firefighters. The public cannot schedule vaccine appointments by calling hospitals directly and are urged not to tie up hospital telephone lines.

For Jefferson County only, appointments are NOT being made by the ADPH COVID-19 Vaccination Scheduling Hotline. People seeking vaccination who are in the current Vaccine Allocation Phase may contact the Jefferson County Unified Command (JCUC) COVID-19 Call Center at 205-85VACC1 (205-858-2221). JCUC has reminded the public to be aware that in Phase 1a, the vaccine is to be distributed to health care personnel and residents of long-term care facilities. Those who are not in the currently eligible group are asked to please not attempt to pre-register so that those who are currently eligible can have the opportunity to get through.

Chief Medical Officer Dr. Mary G. McIntyre said ADPH is documenting requests for the COVID-19 vaccine and will prioritize vaccine distribution based on established CDC guidance and vaccine availability. Additional information will be provided through the ADPH vaccine website, social media, and news releases.

The toll-free COVID-19 Vaccine Scheduling Hotline number is 1-855-566-5333. For general information about COVID-19, the COVID-19 Information Hotline number is 1-800-270-7268.