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STATE OF CONNECTICUT

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# GOVERNOR NED LAMONT

## **GOVERNOR LAMONT ANNOUNCES CONNECTICUT RESIDENTS OVER 75 CAN NOW REGISTER FOR COVID-19 VACCINATION APPOINTMENTS AS STATE TRANSITIONS TO PHASE 1B**

*1.3 Million Residents Are Eligible to Receive Vaccine in Phase 1b as 46,000 First Doses Are Expected to Be Delivered Weekly from the Federal Government*

*Governor Lamont Accept Advisory Group's Recommendations to Expand Phase 1b*

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Ned Lamont today announced that phase 1b of Connecticut's COVID-19 vaccine rollout will begin on Monday, January 18, 2021, and residents in the state over the age of 75 can now schedule appointments to receive the vaccine.

In addition, Governor Lamont announced that he is accepting the recommendations of the Allocation Subcommittee of the Governor's COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Group to expand phase 1b to include additional population groups. In the coming weeks, phase 1b will expand to include:

- Residents between the ages of 65 and 74 (approximately 353,000 individuals); and
- Residents between the ages of 16 and 64 who have underlying health conditions that put them at greater risk of the virus (approximately 362,000 individuals).

This is in addition to those already in phase 1b, including:

- Residents who are 75 and older (approximately 277,000 individuals);
- Residents and staff of congregate settings (approximately 50,000 individuals); and
- Frontline essential workers (approximately 325,000 individuals).

In order to ensure that the most vulnerable populations within phase 1b are prioritized, Governor Lamont has directed the Connecticut Department of Public Health to begin the phase by prioritizing the vaccine for persons over the age of 75 in the first wave. As supply increases and a significant portion of individuals over 75 have received the vaccine, phase 1b will open up to include more of the eligible populations with a focus on addressing issues of equity and risk of poor outcomes from COVID-19.

It is estimated that 1.3 million Connecticut residents are eligible for phase 1b. Currently, the state anticipates receiving about 46,000 first doses of the vaccine per week from the federal government.

All eligible residents are required to make an appointment in advance of receiving the vaccine. Beginning today, individuals over the age of 75 can make appointments utilizing the following tools:

- **Healthcare Provider:** Many residents have already been or will be contacted to schedule an appointment by their healthcare provider if their provider is participating in the state's vaccine program. Not all providers are administering the vaccine. A list of participating providers is available at [ct.gov/covidvaccine](https://ct.gov/covidvaccine). *Residents are urged not to contact their physician or healthcare provider directly for COVID vaccine appointments.*
- **Online:** A form can be accessed online at [ct.gov/covidvaccine](https://ct.gov/covidvaccine) that allows individuals to schedule an appointment through the web-based Vaccine Administration Management System (VAMS).
- **Telephone:** Those without internet access can call Connecticut's COVID Vaccine Appointment Assistance Line at **877-918-2224**. The phone system was created in partnership with the Department of Public Health and United Way of Connecticut and is specifically targeted to provide support for eligible vaccine recipients who have limited technology access, or who have language, disability, or other barriers that could prevent them from using existing self-scheduling options successfully. The line will take calls on Mondays through Fridays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and will offer a call-back option when all contact specialists are busy serving other callers. The team will aim to return calls as soon as possible, with the goal of same-day response.

Further details on phase 1b eligibility will be forthcoming and will include guidance for employers, employees, self-employed, and other individuals on when and how to schedule vaccine appointments and where vaccinations will be available.

Providers may fill appointments with other eligible phase 1b populations if spots are available.

"The Connecticut Department of Public Health has worked diligently with our healthcare partners across the state to increase access to the vaccine, but I must continue to urge patience at this point in time," **Governor Lamont said**. "We know many people are excited to receive the vaccine and the promise of the future that comes with it, but we are limited in our ability to distribute them purely based on the amount we receive from the federal government. We are hopeful we will see increased allocations in the coming weeks and months, which will lead to even more light at the end of the tunnel."

"Thousands of Connecticut residents have already received their first round of the vaccine, and second-dose shots started last week," **Connecticut Public Health Acting Commissioner Dr. Deidre Gifford said**. "With the start of phase 1b, we are bringing on additional capacity to administer the vaccine to tens of thousands more Connecticut residents – protecting our seniors, our workforce, and the most vulnerable among us. Vaccinating millions of Connecticut citizens will take time and I urge patience and continued vigilance, including wearing face masks, social distancing and avoiding large gatherings. Our state's approach has been balanced, allowing for flexibility when it comes to who gets vaccinated, while ensuring as many of our vulnerable residents are at the front of the line during this phase."

To date, more than 160,000 people in Connecticut have received the vaccine during phase 1a, which began December 14 and includes population groups such as healthcare personnel, residents and staff of nursing homes and assisted living facilities, and medical first responders.

Connecticut ranks number five nationally in the percentage of population that have been vaccinated so far.

For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 vaccination distribution plans in Connecticut, visit [ct.gov/covidvaccine](https://ct.gov/covidvaccine).