



Pritzker Administration Expands Vaccine Eligibility To Illinoisans With Serious Medical Conditions Like Heart Disease And Cancer

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CHICAGO – Building on efforts to equitably distribute the COVID-19 vaccine, Governor Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Health today announced that Illinoisans with serious medical conditions can be vaccinated, in line with federal guidance. With significantly increased supply on the way from the federal government and the Johnson & Johnson vaccine poised for approval, the Pritzker administration launched Phase 1B+ and has asked all local health departments and providers to begin vaccinating this medically vulnerable population as soon as possible.

The expansion includes residents 16 and older with disabilities or underlying conditions who aren't otherwise covered in previous eligibility categories, in accordance with CDC guidelines. At the same time, the state has made substantial progress toward vaccinating health care workers, seniors in long-term care facilities and others who are already eligible for the vaccine.

Illinois also vaccinated a record 130,000 people on Wednesday, including records for both first and second doses.

“As states and cities across the country expand eligibility for the vaccine, it’s vital that the most medically vulnerable like those with heart disease, lung disease and cancer have access to the vaccine, regardless of their age,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “I’m thrilled to see that we can effectively administer more than 100,000 doses a day, and with the federal supply projected to hit 100,000 doses delivered daily in mid-March, we must be prepared to vaccinate this population as quickly as possible.”

In accordance with the CDC guidelines, the expanded list of eligible conditions will include cancer, chronic kidney disease, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), diabetes, heart conditions, immunosuppressed states from a solid organ transplant, smoking, obesity, pregnancy, pulmonary diseases, and sickle cell disease.

Effective today, state-supported sites outside of Cook County will begin taking appointments for the 1B+ phase. A complete list of these sites can be found at <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/>. Appointments will remain limited as federal supply continues to steadily ramp up.

Beginning in mid-March, an additional 100,000 doses of vaccine per day on average are expected to be allocated to the state by the federal government. Also, when the FDA Emergency Use Authorization is granted for the Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine, another 100 million doses are expected to be delivered nationwide.