



State Partners With Touchette Regional Hospital To Expand Equitable Distribution Of Vaccine In Metro East

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METRO EAST- Building on existing efforts to ensure equitable distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine, Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Public Health today announced a new partnership with Touchette Regional Hospital to administer vaccines to residents in Metro East. The partnership is part of a broader pilot program the state launched in coordination with five federally qualified health centers (FQHC) and five safety net hospitals across the state. In the coming weeks, the pilot program will expand to include additional critical access hospitals across the state. Vaccines are available to residents by appointment only.

“Ensuring the most vulnerable Illinois residents have a trusted, reliable health care provider to administer the COVID-19 vaccine is critical to combating this deadly virus,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “This new pilot program builds on robust efforts by the administration to ensure equity is at the center of the state’s Vaccine Administration Plan. By partnering with providers in underserved communities we can reduce vaccine hesitancy and ensure we are reaching Illinoisans in the communities they call home.”

The state will provide each of the sites with approximately 300-500 vaccine doses per week, in addition to the allocated doses the state distributes to existing health care partners like local health departments and pharmacies. IDPH used the COVID-19 Community Vulnerability Index (CCVI) as well as local vaccination rates to select sites for the first round of the pilot program.

The new partnership between the state and Touchette as well as other similar providers will help ensure that communities hardest hit by COVID-19 have access to the vaccine. The program also aims to reduce vaccine hesitancy in underserved areas by providing residents the ability to receive vaccines more quickly from trusted providers.

"My top priority always has been, and will continue to be, the assurance that communities in the 57th district have access to this vaccine," said Sen. Belt (D-Madison & St. Clair Counties). "The partnership with Touchette Hospital will not only provide that access, but also the trust needed to reduce residents' reluctance to receive the vaccine."

"As we continue to fight COVID-19 across the state, to know that the most vulnerable populations will have access to the vaccination is a priority. We know the statistics and how COVID-19 has impacted Black Illinoisans who have been shown to be disproportionately affected by the hardships of the pandemic—from health and deaths. I thank the Governor and I am excited to know that Touchette will be a vaccination site for our community and I encourage residents to use the location for their vaccination needs," said Rep. Greenwood (D-East St. Louis).

The new pilot program builds on the federal FQHC vaccination program through which five FQHCs across the state receive vaccine doses directly from the federal government. Illinois has an expanding network of state-supported vaccination sites operating across southern, central and northern Illinois. To find additional information about vaccine availability, including locations and eligibility, visit www.coronavirus.Illinois.gov.

Sites participating in the pilot program include:

Metro East:

- Touchette Regional Hospital, St. Clair County

Cook & Collar Counties:

- Family Christian Health Center, Cook County
- Chicago Behavioral Hospital, Cook County
- AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center, DuPage County
- Lake County Health Department and FQHC, Lake County

Central Illinois:

- Crossing Healthcare, Macon County

Southern Illinois:

- Rural Health, Inc., Union County
- SSM Health St. Mary's Hospital, Marion County

Quad Cities:

- Community Health Care, Inc., Rock Island County