

One Year Anniversary Of First COVID-19 Vaccinations In Illinois

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SPRINGFIELD – More than 18 million doses later, the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) is recognizing the one-year anniversary of the first COVID-19 vaccines administered in Illinois. On December 15, 2020, roughly 450 doses of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine were administered to health care workers after being delivered to the state the day before.

IDPH and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency have partnered with communities to host more than 5,600 vaccination clinics around the state, including 1,400 youth-school clinics and approximately 1,900 equity-based clinics. Another 870 events have already been scheduled.

“One year and 18 million doses later, the COVID-19 vaccine has saved countless lives across Illinois,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “I am incredibly grateful for the scientists, researchers and public health professionals who made this historic effort possible, allowing us to reunite with loved ones, return to small businesses, and engage with our communities once again. As we recognize the progress we’ve made, I urge all eligible Illinoisans to receive their vaccine or booster and protect themselves and their families this holiday season.”

“We have come a long way from the first doses of COVID-19 vaccine administered a year ago today, and we must continue our fight against this pandemic,” said IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike. “Since that first day, we’ve seen one COVID-19 vaccine fully approved, the age for those eligible to receive a vaccine expanded to everyone 5 years and older, and booster doses for everyone 16 years and older. I urge anyone who is hesitant about the COVID-19 vaccine to look at the successful history of these safe and effective vaccines.”

“A year ago, I remember feeling fortunate to be one of the first in the state to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and I was thankful and appreciative of all the work that went into developing it,” said OSF HealthCare Saint Francis Emergency Services Medical Director Dr. Victor Chan. “The last year has been challenging for everyone and even now, marking the one-year anniversary of having the vaccine available, it’s still a reminder that we can’t let our guard down. The vast majority of patients we see that are being admitted to the hospital are, unfortunately, unvaccinated. I encourage everyone who is able to get vaccinated or receive a booster dose. If you have questions, please talk to a health care provider.”

While the vaccination rate has slowed, approximately 71% of all Illinoisans have received at least one dose, 63% are fully vaccinated, and more than 30% have received a booster dose according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“OSF HealthCare was honored to host Governor Pritzker and Dr. Ezike a year ago as they witnessed the first COVID-19 vaccines in the state being given to OSF Mission Partners in Peoria,” said Mike Cruz, M.D., Chief Operating Officer, OSF HealthCare. “The vaccines then and now play an important role in helping to bring the pandemic under control. We are still seeing a major impact on our health care system with the latest surge of COVID-19 patients and encourage everyone to get fully vaccinated or receive a booster dose when able. It’s still our best shot at ending, or at least controlling, the pandemic.”

Organizations wanting to host a clinic in their community can apply online at <https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/vaccinationclinics.html>. Vaccine are also offered at five of the state [Community-Based Testing Sites](#) across Illinois. To find other vaccination locations near you go to vaccines.gov.