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## **Gov. Wolf: COVID-19 Vaccine Gives Us Hope as We Update Plans and Keep Fighting to Stop the Virus**

**Harrisburg, PA** – The commonwealth’s COVID-19 vaccination distribution plan was designed to be fluid and flexible to meet guidance and recommendations from the federal government. Today, Governor Tom Wolf and Secretary of Health Dr. Rachel Levine announced the fourth version of the plan, detailing the updates and how the state is working to ensure safe, swift implementation.

“Vaccinations are an important tool in stopping the spread of COVID-19, and the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency have done a lot of hard work to facilitate a smooth, strategic vaccine rollout,” Gov. Wolf said. “But most of the vaccine distribution process is controlled by the federal government and unfortunately, that means there are a lot of unknowns.

“However, my administration is doing everything we can now to prepare for the day when the vaccine is more widely available. There are hopeful signs we must embrace. They will help us regain control in a time when many things may seem very out of control.”

The first shipments of vaccine to Pennsylvania are being given to health care workers, and through the Federal Pharmacy Partnership with information the Department of Health has shared with the federal government, people working and residing in the state’s long-term care facilities have also begun to receive the vaccine. This work continues.

While the vaccine supply remains limited the department’s goals are to prioritize persons who receive the vaccine to maximize benefits and minimize harms caused by the virus. Ongoing goals remain to promote justice, mitigate health inequities, and promote transparency.

Getting Pennsylvanians immunized with a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine is an essential step in reducing the number of cases, hospitalizations and deaths. The Department of Health guides the distribution and administration of the COVID-19 vaccine throughout 66 of the 67 counties in the commonwealth. Philadelphia County receives independent federal funding, its own vaccine allotment, and is establishing its own COVID-19 vaccination administration plan.

The state's vaccination plan follows the blueprint set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding a COVID-19 Vaccination Plan. The plan is an interim one that is being continuously updated to reflect the latest recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and other guidance available and feedback received.

Dr. Levine provided details of the newly revised state plan.

"This update aligns our plan with the latest recommendations from the ACIP and CDC," Dr. Levine said. "Phase 1A has been further defined to identify specific health care providers. Phase 1B is now a significantly larger group of people that includes people age 75 and older, those with significant health issues and essential workers. This update also creates a Phase 1C, which is those people age 65-74 and people with high-risk conditions such as cancer, COPD, heart conditions and pregnant women, and those essential workers not included in Phase 1A or B."

When more vaccine is available, anyone who was not previously covered and is age 16 and older, will now be vaccinated in Phase 2.

The revised plan as posted on the department's website includes [a comment form](#) for all interested parties to provide input to be considered by the department. This form helps to fulfill the administration's goal of promoting transparency and making this fluid process as inclusive as possible.

"Our recent success in slowing the spread of the virus, and the hope that we've been given with the introduction of these vaccines should energize all of us to continue the fight against this disease," Gov. Wolf said. "We need to remain patient as vaccine distribution expands and the Department of Health works to keep everyone informed of the status of vaccine."

"It will take time, but a future without COVID-19 is possible, and I thank all Pennsylvanians for joining me in fighting for that future."

The most up-to-date information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, including the fourth version of the plan can be found on the [vaccine section](#) of the department's website.

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