MARYLAND
Department of Health

Larry Hogan, Governor • Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor • Dennis R. Schrader, Acting Secretary

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BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR AUDIOLOGISTS, HEARING AID DISPENSERS & SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGISTS
Jennifer L. Mertes, Board Chair • Candace G. Robinson, Executive Director

January 18, 2021

Dear Constituents,

Thank you for contacting the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) regarding the prioritization of COVID-19 vaccinations.

Maryland has been planning for the deployment of COVID-19 vaccines since early 2020. Like other states, Maryland is reliant on the federal government for its supply of vaccines. Vaccine distribution for the entire country is being managed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) through Operation Warp Speed (OWS). As the CDC allocates vaccine supplies to Maryland, the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) will order supplies on behalf of the health care providers that will administer the doses directly to Marylanders. Throughout the vaccination process, MDH will coordinate with health care providers to ensure that they have the information and resources required to administer vaccines as efficiently and safely as possible.

Since January 5, those included in Phase 1A have been eligible to receive the vaccine. On Monday, January 18, the State of Maryland will officially enter Phase 1B, prioritizing Maryland residents who are 75 years and older. Phase 1B also includes:

- Marylanders in assisted living, independent living, developmental disabilities or behavioral health group homes, and other congregate living facilities
  - State health officials have activated Part B of the CVS and Walgreens federal pharmacy partnership to include assisted living and all other long-term care facilities.
- Individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- High-risk incarcerated individuals;
- Continuity of government vaccinations;
- Education, including K-12 teachers, support staff, and childcare providers
  - For teachers and education staff, State Superintendent of Education Dr. Karen Salmon has submitted plans for how each jurisdiction will vaccinate its educators, and school systems will begin to implement those plans in the coming weeks.

On Monday, January 25, the state will enter Phase 1C, which includes:

- Maryland residents ages 65 to 74;
- Public health and safety workers not covered in Phase 1A;
- Essential workers in lab services, food and agriculture production, manufacturing, the U.S. Postal Service, public transit, and grocery stores.

The state is directing all Maryland hospitals and county health departments to utilize their next allocations for clinics focused on elderly populations. State officials are granting county leaders the flexibility to move through the phases of vaccination protocols faster, so long as they prioritize the elderly and the most vulnerable populations in their jurisdictions.

Marylanders who are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccination are encouraged to visit covidvax.maryland.gov and enter their address, ZIP code, or location to view vaccination clinics available within a 50-mile radius. You must then contact the clinic of your choice for scheduling and more information. Additional sites will be added as providers verify they are ready.

As we learn more from the federal government, we will adjust the state's vaccination distribution plan. The state will issue vaccination updates through a number of channels, including our statewide 2-1-1 texting service. To opt-in to receive these alerts, text 'MdReady' to 898-211. Marylanders are also encouraged to visit covidlink.maryland.gov to review safety information and learn more about the state's COVID-19 vaccination plan.

We look forward to providing subsequent updates at a later point as we gain more information from the federal government. Please do not hesitate to contact us at MDH for any additional questions.

Sincerely,

Candace G. Robinson, Au.D.
Executive Director
Board of Audiologists, Hearing Aid Dispensers & Speech-Language Pathologists