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## **COVID-19 Update: Nursing Home Visitation, Progression of Vaccine Eligibility**

(COLUMBUS, Ohio)—Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jon Husted today provided the following updates on Ohio's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **WEATHER DELAY UPDATE**

Due to last week's winter weather, the delivery of some Pfizer vaccines and all Moderna vaccines were delayed. Some providers used second doses that they had already received to avoid clinic cancellations. Those second doses will be backfilled with the shipments they receive this week.

Additional delayed shipments of Pfizer and Moderna will arrive between today and Wednesday.

For providers who canceled appointments last week, Governor DeWine is urging them to expand their appointment schedules to include evening and weekend hours to catch up.

### **NURSING HOME VISITATION**

The number of new COVID-19 cases in Ohio's nursing homes has dropped significantly to 343 new cases last week compared to the peak of 2,832 new cases in December.

As the number of nursing-home cases continues to drop due to vaccinations in long-term facilities, Governor DeWine today reminded nursing home staff and families of nursing home residents about the status of visitation in Ohio's nursing homes. Visitation is permitted at nursing homes in Ohio if the facilities meet the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) criteria to allow visits:

- No new onset of COVID-19 cases in the last 14 days;
- The facility is not currently conducting outbreak testing; and
- CMS reports the COVID-19 county positivity rate at less than 10 percent.

Compassionate care visits, which are special visits in which a family member or other visitor provides comfort, support, and assistance to a resident whose well-being is suffering or at risk, are always permitted regardless of the criteria above.

Governor DeWine [sent a letter today](#) to all nursing homes in Ohio reminding them to check their county positivity rate every week to determine their visitation status and to remind them to allow for compassionate care visits.

Ohio's nursing home facilities are required to report their visitation status to [Ohio's Long-Term Care Visitation Dashboard](#).

If you have a loved one in need of a compassionate care visit but are having trouble scheduling a visit, contact Ohio's Office of the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman at [OhioOmbudsman@age.ohio.gov](mailto:OhioOmbudsman@age.ohio.gov) or 1-800-282-1206.

### **PROGRESSION OF VACCINE ELIGIBILITY**

Governor DeWine provided information on the progression of vaccine eligibility in Ohio. Because those ages 65 and older make up approximately 87 percent of all COVID-19 deaths in Ohio, no additional age groups are eligible for the vaccine at this time. Once the demand for the vaccine has been met for those 65 and older, those ages 60 and older will become eligible. After a period of vaccination for this age group, those ages 55 and older will become eligible, followed by those ages 50 and up.

Individuals in specific small groups that could have an increased risk of exposure to the virus may also potentially be included in the 60 and older vaccination phase.

### **PHASE 1B MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

Last week, vaccine eligibility opened up to those Ohioans born with or who have early childhood conditions that are carried into adulthood, which put them at higher risk for adverse outcomes due to COVID-19. Today, Governor DeWine asked Ohio hospitals and doctors with access to the vaccine to begin to proactively reach out to these patients with the specific medical conditions outlined in [Phase 1B](#) to schedule vaccination.

### **OTHER PRIORITY POPULATIONS**

In Ohio's eight state-operated developmental centers, more than 91 percent of residents have accepted their first vaccine.

More than 14,000 Ohioans living with developmental and intellectual disabilities who also have a certain health condition they were born with or developed in childhood and carried into adulthood have also received their first dose of vaccine.

Ohio is working to complete the vaccination of residents and staff in congregate settings for residential treatment facilities, mental health residential care facilities, and recovery housing.

### **ROCKET MORTGAGE EXPANSION IN CLEVELAND**

Lt. Governor Jon Husted relayed the news that Rocket Mortgage has moved another step forward in its downtown Cleveland expansion plans, as the Ohio Tax Credit Authority approved the project for tax credit assistance at its meeting this morning. The company plans to bring 630 new jobs to the Northeast Ohio region, adding to its current workforce of 721.

Rocket Mortgage considered several cities for its expansion and ultimately chose Cleveland.

Partners on the project include the Ohio Development Services Agency, JobsOhio, the city of Cleveland, Team NEO, and the Greater Cleveland Partnership.

### **CURRENT CASE DATA**

In total, there are 955,378 confirmed and probable cases of COVID-19 reported in Ohio and 16,874 confirmed and probable COVID-19 deaths. A total of 49,492 people have been hospitalized throughout the pandemic, including 7,044 admissions to intensive care units. In-depth data can be accessed by visiting [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov).

