

Commonwealth of Virginia
Office of Governor Ralph S. Northam

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Office of the Governor

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**Governor Northam Announces Virginia to
Expand Vaccine Eligibility to All Adults by
April 18 as Vaccinations Continue Rising**

~ Virginia nears end of Phase 1 waiting list, begins moving to Phase 2 ~

PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY—Governor Ralph Northam today announced that all individuals in Virginia age 16 and older will be eligible to get the COVID-19 vaccine starting on Sunday, April 18, ahead of the May 1 nationwide goal set by President Joe Biden. Governor Northam made the announcement during a visit to a vaccination clinic at First Mount Zion Baptist Church in Prince William County, where more than 1,000 vaccines will be administered today.

This news comes as nearly every Virginian in the highest risk groups who has pre-registered for a vaccination appointment has received one, and those still on the pre-registration list will receive appointment invitations within the next two weeks.

“The COVID-19 vaccine is the light at the end of the tunnel—and that light is getting brighter every day as more and more Virginians get vaccinated,” **said Governor Northam**. “We continue to work with diverse providers and community partners across the Commonwealth to distribute vaccines in a fair and equitable way and ensure those at the highest risk are vaccinated first. Expanding vaccine eligibility to all adults marks an important milestone in our ongoing efforts to put this pandemic behind us, and I thank all of the public health staff, health care workers, vaccinators, and volunteers who have helped make this possible.”

With over 3.7 million doses of vaccine administered so far in Virginia, more than one in three adults have received at least one dose and one in five Virginians are fully vaccinated. Virginia is administering vaccine doses as quickly as they are provided by the federal government. Because the Commonwealth has followed guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to prioritize those at highest risk, and because Virginia is a large and diverse state with many essential workers, many out-of-state commuters, and a high percentage of the population that wants to be vaccinated, it has taken some time to open eligibility to the general public.

In addition to adopting phased eligibility based on risk, Virginia has focused on equity throughout its vaccination effort by providing targeted resources in multiple languages, scheduling clinics in collaboration with community partners, performing grassroots outreach to drive pre-registration and scheduling, and implementing large, state-run Community Vaccination Centers in areas with vulnerable populations. These efforts will continue when eligibility opens to the general public in Phase 2.

Twenty-one of Virginia's 35 local health districts have already started vaccinating essential workers in Phase 1c after providing appointments to everyone eligible in Phases 1a or 1b on the pre-registration list. Beginning April 4, districts that have invited everyone pre-registered in Phase 1c may invite members of the general public who have pre-registered. Based on the supply projected by the federal government, all local health districts will have enough vaccine to open appointments to the general public by April 18. Those at highest risk will continue to receive priority in the scheduling process.

Everyone who lives or works in Virginia should pre-register so they can be notified when they are eligible for vaccination and an appointment is available. To pre-register, visit vaccinate.virginia.gov or call 877-VAX-IN-VA (877-829-4682, TTY users call 7-1-1). Assistance is available in English, Spanish, and more than 100 other languages. Videoconferencing in American Sign Language is also available at vaccinate.virginia.gov.

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