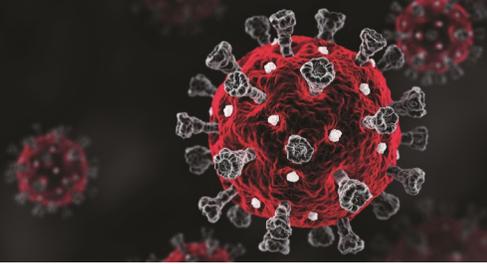


Vax Matters



April 9, 2021



News

Virtual Town Halls to Address Vaccine Hesitancy

NJDOH is hosting two free virtual town halls this month aimed at addressing facts, fears and myths related to the COVID-19 vaccines.

Registration is required for both. When participants register, they can submit questions that they would like addressed during the town hall.

The first, *Saving Lives with the COVID-19 Vaccine in NJ Asian-American Communities*, takes place from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. April 20. To register, visit: <https://bit.ly/39EjPYt>.

The town hall will be moderated by Janine Llamzon, a nurse with St. Joseph's University Medical Center in Paterson, and will feature Dr. Hafeza Shaikh, Cherry Hill Free Clinic and co-founder of CommUNITY SJP, and Dr. Naveen Merothra, pediatrician and adjunct faculty member, Rutgers – Robert Wood Johnson Medical School.

Second Town Hall April 27

A second *Saving Lives with the COVID-19 Vaccine* town hall, for the general public, will be held from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. April 27. To register, visit: <https://bit.ly/3rRLrPX>.

This town hall, moderated by Dr. Meg Fisher, special advisor to NJDOH Commissioner Persichilli, will feature Dr. Irini Daskalaki, a pediatric infectious disease physician, medical epidemiologist and Medical Lead, COVID-19 Response, Princeton University Health Services; Dr. Hafeza Shaikh, Cherry Hill Free Clinic and co-founder of CommUNITY SJP; and Dr. Tamara Green, a board certified emergency medicine physician.

Three earlier town halls focused on the Black and Caribbean, and Latinx communities (in English/Spanish) and are on the [NJDOH YouTube Channel](#).

Vaccine Eligibility To Open for All New Jerseyans Age 16+ April 19

All individuals age 16 and older will be eligible for COVID-19 vaccinations beginning April 19 – two weeks ahead of the state's initial target of May 1.

The state's phased rollout has successfully administered over 5.1 million doses of vaccine to essential frontline workers, educators, high-risk groups, and other eligible adults who live, work or study in N.J.



Governor Murphy and First Lady Tammy Murphy received their first COVID-19 vaccine doses during a visit to the Atlantic City Convention Center mega-site with Commissioner Persichilli on Friday.

More groups, including individuals age 55 to 64, became eligible on April 5 (see current eligibility chart, page 2).

“Over the last several months, our Administration has worked closely with our communities and federal partners to ensure an efficient, accessible, and equitable vaccination program,” Governor Murphy said.

With over 2 million individuals already fully vaccinated, New Jersey is on track to meet Governor Murphy's goal of fully vaccinating 4.7 million adults by June 30.

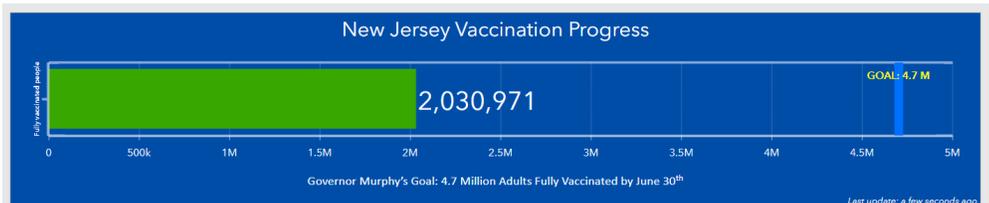
“The Department encourages residents to get vaccinated as soon as they have the opportunity,” said New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) Commissioner Judith Persichilli.

Core to the state's vaccination efforts is ensuring equitable access for underserved populations. In addition to the FEMA Community Vaccination Center in Newark, to date, nearly 58,000 overall doses have been administered at the state's 10 community-based partnership sites: Somerset, Trenton, Elizabeth, Paterson, Vineland, Camden, Jersey City, Orange, Newark and Pleasantville.

For information on eligibility, vaccination sites and to preregister for a vaccination, visit covid19.nj.gov/vaccine.

Vaccination Progress

- ◆ 5.1M+ total vaccine doses administered
- ◆ 3.2M+ people with at least one vaccine dose
- ◆ 2M+ fully vaccinated people



NJDOH Updates Travel Guidance for Fully Vaccinated Residents

The state Health Department has released updated travel guidelines that follow revised travel recommendations from the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Under the guidance, fully vaccinated people and those who clinically recovered from COVID-19 in the past three months who are traveling within the U.S. do not need to be tested for COVID-19 before or after travel to New Jersey and do not need to self-quarantine upon return.

A person is considered fully vaccinated two or more weeks after receiving the second dose of a two-dose series or after a single-dose vaccine. All travelers should continue mitigation strategies such as wearing a mask, avoiding crowds, physically distancing, and

washing hands frequently.

“With the protection of the vaccine, more individuals can get back to much of what we have missed in the past year, and that includes travel,” said Commissioner Persichilli.

The CDC still recommends that fully vaccinated persons arriving in the U.S. from abroad be tested for COVID-19 three to five days after return, but no quarantine following travel or test before travel (unless required by the destination) is needed.

Recommendations for unvaccinated people remain unchanged, including deferring travel until fully vaccinated.

Details on the guidance can be found at: [Current Restrictions on Travel](#).

Faith-based Toolkit Available

The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated the state and taken the lives of thousands of residents. Although there are now three vaccines that offer hope, vaccine hesitancy and mistrust remain significant barriers.

Faith-based leaders are valued messengers in their communities. Their support is vital in helping to address common myths, increase knowledge, and boost vaccine confidence.

A faith-based toolkit and interactive quiz game are available in English and Spanish at: https://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/topics/covid2019_vaccination.shtml.

We encourage faith-based leaders to use the materials to enhance communication with their congregants on this important public health issue.

The following groups are currently eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine:

- Age 16 and older with certain medical conditions
- Age 16 and older with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Age 55 and older
- Child care workers in licensed & registered settings
- Clergy
- Communications infrastructure support, IT and media
- Educators & support staff in Pre-K through 12 and higher education settings
- Eldercare and support
- Elections personnel
- First responders
- Food production, agriculture, and food distribution
- Health care workers
- Hospitality workers
- Individuals experiencing homelessness & those living in shelters
- Judicial system
- Laundry service workers
- Librarians & support staff
- Medical supply chain workers
- Members of tribal communities
- Migrant farm workers
- Postal and shipping services
- Public safety workers
- Real estate, building, and home service workers
- Residents & staff of high-risk congregate care facilities
- Residents & staff of long-term care facilities
- Retail financial institution workers
- Sanitation workers
- Social services support staff
- Transportation workers
- Utility workers
- Warehousing and logistics

Learn more at covid19.nj.gov/vaccine

NJDOH Efforts Reach 24,000 Stakeholders, Community Leaders

NJDOH's outreach efforts to stakeholders and other community leaders to build public confidence in the COVID-19 vaccine and vaccination process has now reached 24,000 stakeholders representing 129 groups since it began last fall.

In addition to Commissioner Persichilli, NJDOH Special Advisor Dr. Meg Fisher; Dr. David Adinaro, Deputy Commissioner, Public Health Services; and Dr. Eddy Bresnitz, Medical Advisor to NJDOH on the

COVID-19 response and Chair of the Professional Advisory Committee, all have been engaged in the efforts.

Groups have included: independent community pharmacies; elected officials; education leaders; interfaith-based groups; aging and senior services; elected officials; disabilities advocates; immigrant advocates; labor unions; healthcare associations; counties and local health departments; law enforcement; and first responders.

Resources

- ◆ NJ Vaccine Call Center: 1-855-568-0545
- ◆ [NJ Transit VAXRIDE](#)
- ◆ [COVID-19 Information Hub Vaccine Page](#)
- ◆ [Community-Based Vaccination Sites](#)

Sign up for Vax Matters