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Health Department of Northwest Michigan COVID-19 Update

Health department answers frequent questions about COVID-19 vaccine appointments

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan continues to receive questions from residents regarding the status of COVID-19 vaccine administration in Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet and Otsego counties. Here are answers to some of the more frequent questions we receive.

I am eligible, why can't I schedule an appointment for the COVID-19 vaccine?

We simply do not have the supply to vaccinate everyone who is eligible right now. Due to the demand for the vaccine, a waiting list has been created and we are scheduling eligible individuals in the order they registered. This system is not perfect as multiple volunteers and partner organizations are registering eligible individuals online or by calling them. We are working hard each week to equitably schedule our residents into the clinics in all four counties. We ask that you not share scheduling links or phone numbers provided to you as your appointment is made. We are continually working to update our waiting list with those who have been scheduled, vaccinated elsewhere, and removing duplicates.

Can you tell me if you've received my registration form and where I am on the waiting list?

Unfortunately, due to the volume of pre-registrations we are not able to reply to individual requests. We currently have approximately 30,000 people on our registration list. Please know that our staff is working diligently to schedule everyone based on order of registration. We are currently scheduling appointments for eligible people who registered in early to mid-January. On your end, we ask that you check your email inbox or spam/junk folders for an email from covid19vaccination@nwhealth.org to make sure you haven't missed an email. Those with difficulty navigating online registration are encouraged to call the Senior Hotline at 231-715-5557 for assistance.

Why can't the health department just order more vaccine?

The health department receives a weekly allocation from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS). We are no longer able to request COVID-19 vaccine. Health departments are provided weekly allocations of the vaccine based on a formula that blends county population and what's called a Social Vulnerability Index. This allocation varies based upon how many doses are available within the state each week.

The county-level population formula estimates those who fit into Phase 1B group A and B (essential frontline workers, corrections staff, and school and childcare staff) and Phase 1C Group A (65 years and older). The Social Vulnerability Index adjusts the population-based allocation of vaccinations to increase supplies to communities at greater risk for adverse outcomes from COVID-19.

The Health Department of Northwest Michigan is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to promote wellness, prevent disease, provide quality healthcare, address health problems of vulnerable populations, and protect the environment for the residents and visitors of Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Otsego counties. For more information, visit nwhealth.org.

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Should I register with other providers in addition to the Health Department of Northwest Michigan?

Yes, we encourage you to register with other area providers. In addition to the Health Department of Northwest Michigan, Munson Healthcare and McLaren Northern Michigan are vaccinating residents in our jurisdiction against COVID-19 through their provider network. People who are currently eligible for the vaccine but waiting for an appointment are also encouraged to register with [Rite Aid](#) and [Meijer](#), which are likely to begin offering the vaccine more broadly in the area soon.

Are you experiencing delays in vaccine shipments, or clinic cancellations due to inclement weather?

At this time, we have not been affected by weather delays that have impacted deliveries of doses to other areas. All our doses were received, and we are moving forward with all scheduled clinics this weekend and next week.

May I get my first dose here before I travel and get my second dose somewhere else?

If at all possible, we ask individuals to be available 3-4 weeks after their first dose. It is difficult to schedule you if you are not available for the second dose as the doses are matched.

Today, February 19, the health department is reporting 14 new cases: Antrim (1), Charlevoix (1), Emmet (7), and Otsego (5) counties. As of 4 p.m. today, the Health Department of Northwest Michigan is reporting:

- Total COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Antrim (908), Charlevoix (1,033), Emmet (1,490), and Otsego (1,151).
- Recovered COVID-19 cases in the following counties: Antrim (782), Charlevoix (903), Emmet (1,239) and Otsego (975).
- Confirmed COVID-19 associated deaths in the following counties: Antrim (19), Charlevoix (12), Emmet (37), and Otsego (25).

The State of Michigan is reporting 579,284 cases and 15,296 deaths.

Stay up to date on the latest information in the Health Department of Northwest Michigan jurisdiction by [liking and following our Facebook page](#) and visiting our [COVID-19 Data Dashboard](#). To locate a testing facility, visit the [Michigan COVID-19 Test Finder website](#). To track the risk levels of COVID-19 pandemic indicators, visit the [MI Safe Start Map website](#). For more information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, visit the MDHHS [vaccine website](#) or the [CDC vaccine website](#).