

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COVID-19 Vaccination Second Doses

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) and the six local hospitals in the health district continue to work quickly to give COVID vaccine to essential workers and high-risk individuals. All together they have administered **1,900** COVID-19 vaccinations, which represents approximately **4.9%** of the health district.

Most of these vaccinations were given to workers in Phase 1A of the COVID-19 prioritization list. The two COVID vaccines currently approved for use by the FDA both require two doses of vaccine, similar to other vaccines that have an initial dose and then a booster dose. The Pfizer vaccines are given at least 21 days apart and the Moderna vaccines are given at least 28 days apart. It can be longer than 28 days before the second dose, but not sooner. The second booster dose for the Phase 1A workers will begin this week in different areas of the health district; some clinics were rescheduled due to inclement weather conditions.

According to the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Phase 1B now includes an **ongoing** priority category, which is those Nebraska residents 65 years and older and those 18 years and older who have a high-risk medical condition. This category was added to the other tiers in Phase 1B to allow more flexibility for vaccine administration in different communities across the state. In SWNPHD's health district, 1B Tier 1 (first responders, utility workers, corrections, education) and this new **ongoing** priority will be the focus of vaccination efforts for the next two months.

SWNPHD is continuing to schedule appointments as soon as the vaccine is received each week. Appointments and shot clinics are scheduled in groups of ten because the Moderna COVID vaccine comes in a vial of 10 doses. COVID shots cannot be given on an individual or walk-in basis. Registrations are taken from the SWNPHD waiting list located at www.swhealth.ne.gov/featured/1 to make appointments. Those interested in registering will need to provide basic information to determine Phase 1 eligibility and will be notified via telephone when community vaccination clinics begin in their area. **Please know that it may be several weeks or even months before you receive a call to schedule your vaccination.**

SWNPHD had 139 new cases of COVID-19 reported January 19th to January 25th. A breakout by county includes: Chase – 16; Dundy – 9; Frontier – 6; Furnas – 45; Hayes – 2; Hitchcock – 6; Keith – 9; Perkins – 2; Red Willow – 44. This brings the totals for the health district to 3486 cases. SWNPHD has received confirmation of three additional deaths due to Covid-19. A breakout of total cases by county is available on SWNPHD's website.

COVID-19 information can be found at dhhs.ne.gov and at swhealth.ne.gov. You can also follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. SWNPHD serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. SWNPHD is located at 404 West 10th St (1 block north of Arby's) in McCook.

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