

## Jan 25, 2021 Press Release

This news release is being made to keep our citizens informed of plans and procedures for Lee County covid-19 vaccinations and includes a recap of state procedures. Even though pharmaceutical companies continue production, only a limited supply of coronavirus vaccine is available because inventory is being shared across the nation. Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are two-round injections which doubles the resources required to get everyone fully protected.

The initial plan as developed by the State of Texas identified providers including healthcare facilities, medical offices and pharmacies with the immediate capabilities to be vaccination points in local communities. In Lee County, for now, that means our pharmacies and some physician offices and urgent care facilities although only one pharmacy has received a limited number of doses. As mandated by state and federal regulations, these limited first vaccines are for residents in certain long term care facilities and for essential personnel including healthcare workers, EMS, firefighters and law enforcement in **category 1A** and those over 65 or those with certain underlying health conditions designated as **category 1B**. For the moment, that stock is depleted locally except for vaccine reserved for second-round injections.

Many individual doctor's offices and pharmacies do not have the staff for large scale inoculations. So, the state is overseeing the formation of high-volume vaccination centers organized by cities and counties throughout the state. These are sometimes referred to as **HUBS**. Each week, a team of medical experts decides which HUBS and local providers will receive vaccine shipments. Over time, sufficient doses will be delivered to vaccinate everyone but it requires our patience as not enough vaccine has yet been produced for everyone.

In most cases, at the time the person is receiving the first-round injection they will automatically be scheduled for the second to ensure the complete immunization. The two vaccines are different so the first and second injections must be the same brand of vaccine. The Moderna vaccine is given to those 18 years old and above and Pfizer is for those 16 and above.

In Giddings, Brookshire Brothers and Pieratt's pharmacies and some doctor's offices are establishing waiting lists for those in categories 1A and 1B. We are in consultation with officials in surrounding counties. We understand there has been some confusion on this issue but regardless of where you live, you may seek vaccination from a variety of providers or HUBS across the state but you must then return to that same facility for your second shot. Registration is required with many having both online and phone-in options. Registration allows you to be notified when your vaccination has been scheduled and provides a record of the amount of vaccine needed in a particular area.

Both Milam and Bastrop Counties have been accepting registrations from Lee County citizens as has St. Marks Hospital in La Grange. Presently, no facility has enough vaccine for everyone on their list and because of this, some providers and HUBs have temporarily stopped taking registrations. The below listed facilities are establishing waiting lists but some such as the Bastrop and Washington County HUB have suspended taking registrations until they receive more vaccine stocks which hopefully will be in the near future. St. Marks Hospital has a telephone number to leave your information which will then be

transferred to their list. You will be called when they have vaccine. You may call or email Milam County to get on their list.

Milam County:	<a href="mailto:aguillen@milamcounty.net">aguillen@milamcounty.net</a>	254-697-7000
Bastrop County HUB:	<a href="http://www.covac.info">www.covac.info</a>	866-268-2289
Fayette County:	St Marks Hospital (automated line)	979-242-2325
Washington County:	Brenham Vaccine Hub	979-353-7683

Lee County officials are engaged in intensive planning to ensure our citizens will be immunized when additional vaccine becomes available. There are over 13,000 persons in Lee County over the age of sixteen and we anticipate that a large number will want the vaccine. This will be a significant undertaking, but we have received complete cooperation from our government partners in Lee and surrounding counties and personnel in the local medical and pharmaceutical fields. As the plan progresses, we will provide updates and additional instructions for our citizens which may include a call for volunteers for those qualified to give injections as well as those with experience in technical support and a variety of other skillsets. As in any other operation of this magnitude, some confusion should be expected, but continuous planning hopefully will alleviate miscommunication.