



Public Health Brief

Richard O. Johnson, M.D., MPH **Nichole Williamson**
Public Health Officer HHS Director
Office: 530-694-2146, Ext 249 Office: 530-694-2235
e-mail: rjohnson@alpinecountyca.gov

24/7/365 Emergency Contact Number
Dispatch: 530-694-2231, Ext 330
Warm Line: 530-694-1011



Thursday March 25, 2021

COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility: Calling All **Eligible** and **Willing** Alpine Residents

As the coronavirus continues its assault on the world's population, we are beginning to see the light at the end of the tunnel. But – we must remember that we are still in the tunnel! Our ticket out of the tunnel is vaccinating as many people as possible. We are in a race against time, as the longer the virus circulates, the greater the risk of new variants developing that will be resistant to our current vaccines.

Today California announced that vaccine will be available on April 1st for all persons 50 years of age and older, and on April 15th for all 16 years of age and older. In Alpine County, we have the Moderna vaccine, which is authorized for all persons 18 years of age and older. We have been available to vaccinate all residents 18 years of age and older since February 24th and are drawing near to completion of that goal!

Eligible:

- All fulltime residents 18 years of age and older.
- All persons who own property or residences in Alpine County, but whose primary place of residence is elsewhere. This does not include extended family/friends who may periodically or even regularly visit your vacation property.
- The above 2 categories are prioritized so that the elderly and those with underlying medical conditions receive first consideration for appointments.
- All essential workers (emergency services – law, fire, EMS, utilities, education, food services) who work in Alpine County, regardless of where they live, including their household members.

Please note that our anticipated supply of vaccine does not permit us to vaccinate the many others who work in Alpine County but do not live in Alpine County. As vaccine becomes more readily available in the weeks to come, access should not be an issue in your county of residence.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Alpine County Health Department, 75-B Diamond Valley Rd., Markleeville, CA 96120
Alpine County Board of Supervisors, Phone: (530) 694-2281
District 1: January Riddle, District 2: Ron Hames, District 3: Irvin Jim,
District 4: Terry Woodrow, District 5: David Griffith

Willing:

We have had an excellent response to our program to vaccinate all Alpine County full and part-time residents. However, there are still some “fence-sitters” who are worried about the vaccine. Some key points:

- The disease is terrible, having killed over 2 million persons worldwide, and >500,000 in the US.
- It is true that most people who become infected do survive. But note how many people who have died are not elderly. For moving portraits of some of these people, go to: [in memoriam | PBS NewsHour](#)
- A significant number of folks have persistent “long-haul” maladies for weeks and months and maybe for life after initial infection, including things like fever, brain fog, intractable headaches, and severe fatigue. This will have huge impact and cost on our society for years and decades to come.
- Almost 150,000,000 people have been vaccinated so far in the US, with an excellent safety record.
- Vaccine not only protects against hospitalization and death, but new evidence shows that it also minimizes the risk of you giving the virus to someone else if you have a mild infection.
- Vaccine has been deemed safe in all phases of pregnancy, and not only protects the mother, but also protects the fetus and the newborn baby.
- It is impossible to become infected from the vaccine, since it does not contain any virus.
- Side effects such as sore arm, fatigue, and fever are common but short lived.
- The vaccine appears to help some persons recover from “long-haul” symptoms for reasons yet to be explained.
- So far the vaccine provides excellent protection against the known variants that are increasingly circulating in California and the US.
- We do not yet know whether or not any boosters will be recommended in the future, but think this possibility is likely.

Native American leaders have expressed that a strong sense of community and a fear of extinction has increased vaccination rates. “Communities have a strong sense of responsibility to protect the Native community and preserve our cultural ways. The high vaccination rates are enough to give our people real hope.” However, tribal leaders express concern about damage to their communities that will be felt long after the pandemic passes. One has said, “I fear the long-term impacts on mental health, our children, community resilience, and cohesiveness. We’re in the middle of a massive storm, and we’re not prepared for the aftermath.”

We recognize that we all have rights. However, I would ask the question – what is the right thing to do? Want to talk with me about your concerns, call the Warm Line at 530-694-1011. I will listen!

If you are eligible in Alpine County, call the Warm Line at 530-694-1011 to be screened. If you do not have transportation, please call the Warm Line, as we will provide it for you at no charge. If you cannot leave your home, we will have staff bring the vaccine to your home. If you are affiliated with a Native American tribe, you may also call the Washoe Tribal Health Center (WTHC) in Dresslerville, Nevada – 775-265-8622, Ext 31182. The WTHC has both the Moderna and the single dose Johnson and Johnson vaccine available.



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Alpine County Health Department, 75-B Diamond Valley Rd., Markleeville, CA 96120
Alpine County Board of Supervisors, Phone: (530) 694-2281
District 1: January Riddle, District 2: Ron Hames, District 3: Irvin Jim,
District 4: Terry Woodrow, District 5: David Griffith