



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 16, 2021

FAYETTE COUNTY COVID-19 VACCINE TASKFORCE REACHING THOUSANDS

Uniontown, PA – The Fayette County COVID-19 Vaccine Taskforce successfully vaccinated approximately 3,600 citizens in its first week of clinics.

Following a press conference launch last week, clinics were hosted across Fayette by WVU Medicine Uniontown Hospital, Highlands Hospital, Fayette County Veterans Affairs and the Centerville Clinics.

Fayette County Commissioner Scott Dunn, who attended several clinics in Uniontown and Connellsville last week, said he's "very happy" with the task force's "continued endeavors."

"Everybody's putting egos aside for the common good here, ensuring we're able to get as many shots into arms as possible. There's a lot of work that goes into hosting one of these vaccination clinics, and everyone is stepping up to make sure it all gets done," Dunn said. "Whether it's registering citizens; scheduling them for vaccines; or volunteering their time at one of the clinics, there's so much work taking place behind the scenes by people not only in county government, but by our partner providers - hospitals, pharmacies and other organizations. Working together is what allows us to pull this all off."

Last week, the task force began utilizing an online registration system, allowing all citizens who wish to receive the vaccine to be added to the list to do so.

"This is a marathon, not a sprint," said WVU Medicine Uniontown Hospital Vice President of Operations Mark Dillon.

Currently, more than 15,000 citizens are registered and being scheduled for future clinics, and that number continues to grow. This week, approximately 3,300 additional citizens are expected to be vaccinated through clinics hosted by the Uniontown and Connellsville hospitals alone.

Fayette Chamber of Commerce Executive Director and COVID-19 Vaccine Taskforce Co-chair Muriel Nuttall said the vaccination clinic process has been working through a "learning curve" since the registration database went live last week.

"We had some challenges at the beginning of the week, but we've been working through them consistently and adapting along the way. Despite the number of people waiting, the task force is pulling big numbers off the list for clinics each day," Nuttall said. "Registering online is still the fastest way to get on the list. Citizens can still call the phone number, but we highly recommend accessing the internet to be added to the database, if at all possible."

Registration to receive the vaccine can be completed at www.fayettecountypa.org. Task force officials are asking that all registrants be extremely careful with their data entry, ensuring phone numbers and email addresses are correct for scheduling purposes.

Completing the registration form takes about two minutes and you will receive an email response upon submission. All clinics are by appointment only.

Anyone can register for the vaccine. However, citizens classified as Phase 1A and 1A+ will be given priority at this time.

Fayette County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) Director and COVID-19 Vaccine Taskforce Co-chair Roy Shipley said those who have left their registration information via the task force hotline are being contacted and added to the registry this week.

“If you called and left a message last week, we’re just asking for patience, as the hotline was overwhelmed, and we want to reach everyone as soon as possible,” he said.

Task force officials are reminding citizens that, once registered, they will receive a phone call to schedule their vaccination appointments. Those phone calls are primarily coming from WVU Medicine Uniontown Hospital and Highlands Hospital at this time.

Citizens are urged to check their phone settings to ensure any calls received from unknown numbers are not being automatically ignored.

“People are missing their calls, and it’s very important for them to answer their phones. If they miss it, they’ll be added back onto the list and have to wait for another call,” Shipley said. “We hope to have a centralized call center in place by the end of this week.

Task force officials are also reminding citizens that you will never be asked to provide insurance, credit card or other financial information when contacted to schedule your appointment.

“If someone asks you for money when scheduling your vaccine, you should consider that to be fraud and hang up,” Shipley said.

Directed by Fayette EMA and the Fayette Chamber of Commerce, the task force was created in January to ensure Fayette County residents have organized access to the COVID-19 vaccine as it becomes available. Members are working with partner providers, in accordance with Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA-DOH) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines to organize agencies, businesses and individuals into required groups.

“Overall, we’re very excited. The process has been good, and our clinics have done really well thus far,” Nuttall said. “We’ve gotten a great response from the public, and our wait times are currently next-to-nothing for those getting vaccinated. We anticipate for the process to become even smoother and easier for everyone moving forward.”

For more information about the Fayette County COVID-19 Vaccination Task Force, access the latest official fact sheet at www.fayettecountypa.org. Vaccine details are also available at www.PA.gov. Additionally, citizens may call the task force hotline at 724-466-4142, or email covidinfo@fcema.org to receive the most up-to-date vaccination information.

To learn more about Fayette County, visit www.FayetteCountyPA.org.

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This communication is part of the Fayette County PR Initiative, which is funded through the Fayette County Local Share Account (LSA) and Hotel Tax Grants in cooperation with the Fayette County Board of Commissioners, Fayette Chamber of Commerce, The Redevelopment Authority of the County of Fayette, The Redstone Foundation and other partners. This funding has been designated for the continued promotion and marketing of Fayette County, PA.

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