



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs
VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System

Office of Public Affairs (310) 268-3340
Media Relations VHAGLAPublicAffairs@va.gov

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 26, 2021

VAGLAHS Begins COVID-19 Vaccines at Santa Maria VA Clinic

LOS ANGELES – VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System (VAGLAHS) announces COVID-19 vaccinations at its Santa Maria community-based outpatient clinic January 26.

As part of its ongoing efforts to provide COVID-19 vaccinations to its more than 87,000 enrolled Veterans, VAGLAHS will offer vaccinations to Veterans assigned to the Santa Maria VA Clinic in accordance with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) approved priority groups.

“As part of our commitment to care for Veterans affected by this deadly virus, we’ve expanded our vaccination efforts to our clinic in Santa Maria,” said Rob Merchant, Executive Director, Ambulatory Care Services, VAGLAHS. “In the coming weeks, we will continue expanding our vaccination efforts to our remaining clinics to ensure that every Veteran who receives care with the Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System has an opportunity to receive this potentially life-saving vaccine.”

The initial phase of vaccinations at the clinic will be offered to enrolled, health care eligible Veterans within groups that include; health care personnel, long-term care facility residents, persons aged 65 years and older, high-risk Veterans (transplant, hemodialysis, spinal cord injury, etc.), and frontline essential workers. For this effort, frontline essential workers include; first responders (firefighters and police) educators (teachers, support staff, daycare), food and agriculture workers, manufacturing workers, corrections workers, U.S. Postal Service workers, public transit workers, and grocery store workers.

“I was originally scheduled to receive a vaccine in West Los Angeles in April,” said Vincent Shriver, a U.S. Air Force and Vietnam Veteran. “But last week my primary care doctor called and said I could come right here to Santa Maria to get the vaccine today. I feel very lucky.”

Veterans assigned to the clinic will be contacted by clinic staff for COVID-19 screening and scheduling for vaccinations. Veterans must be eligible for Veterans Health Administration (VHA) healthcare and enrolled with VAGLAHS to receive the vaccine.

“Our utmost priority remains the health and safety of our Veterans,” said Merchant. “This vaccine will enable us to continue providing Central Coast Veterans with the high-quality health care they’ve earned and deserve.”

Veterans assigned to the clinic will be offered the Pfizer Vaccine as part of the larger VAGLAHS vaccine program. Each VHA facility received one of the two vaccines that received emergency use authorization from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

For more info, please visit www.losangelesva.gov.

For any media queries, please contact Donnell Evans, Public Affairs Specialist, VAGLAHS, at Donnell.Evans2@va.gov or call 310-478-3711 Ext 49153.

ABOUT VAGLAHS: VAGLAHS is one component of the VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network (VISN22) offering services to Veterans residing in Southern California. VAGLAHS consists of two ambulatory care centers, a tertiary care facility and eight community-based outpatient clinics. VAGLAHS serves Veterans residing throughout five counties: Kern, Los Angeles, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura. There are approximately 1.4 million Veterans in the VAGLAHS service area.

-VAGLAHS-