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Gov. Beshear Hails Arrival of First COVID-19 Vaccine in Kentucky

Governor urges continued vigilance as U.S. begins rollout of life-saving inoculations

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Dec. 13, 2020) – Today, Gov. Andy Beshear marked a major milestone in the battle against the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) as the first vaccines against the deadly virus arrived in the commonwealth.

The initial shipment of the two-dose Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines has arrived in Kentucky, delivered to Louisville's UPS Worldport. The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine was the first to win approval by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. To see photos, click [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

"The Pfizer vaccine, which we believe to be 95% effective, has now been authorized in this emergency for us to start vaccinating individuals," said Gov. Beshear. "The vaccine started to be shipped from the factory and a significant portion landed in Kentucky today. Kentucky is going to play a major role in getting this vaccine to people all over the eastern United States through UPS' Worldport. We in the commonwealth are excited to be a big part of defeating this virus all over this country. We now believe that the first individuals will be vaccinated here

in the commonwealth tomorrow morning. We are less than 24 hours away from the beginning of the end of this virus.”

The Governor said those most at risk will get the vaccine first.

As shipments continue, Kentucky is expected to receive exactly [12,675 vaccine](#) vials that will soon make their way to 11 regional and ready hospitals in Louisville, Paducah, Bowling Green, Madisonville, Pikeville, Corbin, Lexington and Edgewood and an additional 25,350 are being delivered to CVS and Walgreens, destined for long-term care facilities in our commonwealth.

Approval is also expected any day for the highly effective Moderna vaccine. This month alone, Kentucky could receive 150,000 doses of vaccine, which the Governor celebrated as great news after a long and tough year.

In the initial rounds, local hospitals, as well as long-term care facilities, which have not yet been announced, will be following guidance issued by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), which advises the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. ACIP is prioritizing vaccinations among health care staff members who have been our only line of defense treating patients and long-term care residents and staff who have been at high risk and greatly affected by the spread of the virus.

The immediate goal is reducing COVID-19 deaths. With 66% of the deaths coming from long-term care facilities, vaccines could help significantly decrease Kentucky’s COVID-19 death toll beginning in January. Also, because long-term care residents tend to require the most care, vaccinations in these facilities will help reduce COVID-19’s burden on Kentucky’s health care system.

Local health departments have also been working closely with the Governor and Dr. Steven Stack, commissioner of the Kentucky Department for Public Health, to prepare for these distributions.

Gov. Beshear said to get back to the Kentucky that we have missed, we need Kentuckians to be vaccinated.

“Our community doctors and nurses, as well as long-term care residents and staff, are preparing to do their part first,” the Governor said. “We will all get a turn. When

it is your turn, I strongly encourage you to get vaccinated so you can do your part to protect yourself, your family and our entire state.”

The phases in which more Kentuckians will get vaccines, and the timing, is still unfolding. But, Kentuckians can get the facts about the vaccines and latest distribution information at kycovid19.ky.gov, which includes:

- [The draft Kentucky vaccination plan](#), which includes a draft outline of our planning phases, critical populations and vaccine provider enrollment and administration.
- [CDC COVID-19 vaccine resources](#)
- Frequently Asked Questions

With this information and by talking with a health care provider, Kentuckians can make a plan to get the vaccine when the time is right.

The Governor said there are still months to go in this battle with the pandemic, but in this historic week to which we are all witness, we can celebrate having turned a corner to a brighter, better Kentucky.

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