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NEWS RELEASE--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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People 55 and older, with qualifying medical conditions, encouraged to begin planning for a priority COVID-19 vaccine

SCPHD urges residents 65 and older to continue to sign up to receive a vaccine

SOUTH CENTRAL IDAHO — This week, Idaho Health and Welfare (IDHW) announced the next [priority subgroup 3.1](#), people 55 and older, will open by March 15th, 2021. This will happen on the same day residents who qualify under [priority subgroup 2.3](#). will be able to start receiving COVID-19 vaccine doses.

As these priority groups open, South Central Public Health District (SCPHD) urges people over 65 years old who do not have a vaccine and are not on a waitlist, to sign up to receive a vaccine as soon as possible.

SCPHD will continue to work through their internal waitlist to provide vaccine for people over the age of 65 first, then direct vaccine toward essential workers and other qualifying residents in subgroup 2.3, before scheduling appointments for residents in group 3.1.

“Our region still has thousands of people over 65 who are waiting for their chance to receive the vaccine. Once we have fulfilled our resident’s needs in subgroup 2.2, we will move on to the next subgroup, and so on, “ said Logan Hudson, SCPHD Division Administrator. “We want our residents to know that we are taking steps to make sure no one is forgotten.”

Vaccine is allotted to each county based on population, and the residents who make up that population vary widely for each county. If an SCPHD office is not able to fill vaccine appointments with residents in a priority group they may move on to the next priority group

before other SCPHD offices to better serve their community. SCPHD asks residents to try to schedule an appointment in their home county, and avoid traveling to receive a vaccine.

SCPHD is encouraging local providers to make vaccine appointments available to residents in groups 2.2 and 2.3 first, before scheduling people in 3.1, but providers are not obligated to follow those recommendations.

“We’ve reached a stage where our vaccine distribution may look different in every city and town. As providers work diligently to offer doses to their communities, the local needs may change their operation slightly.” said Josh Jensen, SCPHD Program Manager. “SCPHD will continue to help providers to ensure no doses are wasted, and vaccine is going to people who qualify in the approved priority groups.”

As the vaccine distribution process continues to change rapidly, SCPHD encourages residents to sign up on the state pre-registration form now, even if they don’t qualify yet for a dose, so they are ready when their priority group opens. Local providers can set specific standards for residents they pull from the registry to ensure no one is receiving vaccine early.

“This is a great opportunity for residents to fill out the form now so they don’t have to worry about following each step of the vaccination process. Signing up early means that as soon as that person qualifies for vaccine, a provider has the opportunity to schedule them,” said Hudson.

There are several ways to sign up for an appointment:

- Pre-register for an appointment on the new State website:
<https://covidvaccine.idaho.gov/>
- Call the SCPHD COVID-19 hotline for help signing up on the state registry: 208-737-1138
- If you are currently qualified to receive vaccine, you may also check our list of local providers to sign up with anyone not using the state registry system:
<https://www.phd5.idaho.gov/Covid-vaccine/>

Recommendations for vaccine prioritization in Idaho are made by the [COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Committee \(CVAC\)](#) and final decisions are made by Governor Brad Little.

Assistance by phone

For those who do not have internet or computer access in Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Twin Falls Counties, please call the SCPHD Call Center to speak to one of our representatives. If you need help determining whether you qualify for vaccine once subgroup 2.3 or 3.1 opens you may visit <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/covid-19-vaccination> or call the SCPHD Call Center. The Call Center can be reached at 208-737-1138 every business day from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm and on weekends from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Additional information and resources:

To view CVAC's vaccine priority plan, visit either of the following links:

- <https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/CURRENT-CVAC-Vaccine-Prioritization.pdf>
- <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/covid-19-vaccination>

To view the breakdown of priority groups visit: <https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Idaho-COVID-19-Vaccine-Advisory-Committee-Prioritization-Updated-March-9-2021.pdf>

To view who currently qualifies for COVID-19 vaccines visit:
<https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/covid-19-vaccination>

Governor Brad Little press release announcing the new state pre-registration tool:
<https://gov.idaho.gov/pressrelease/idaho-launches-covid-19-vaccine-appointment-pre-registration-system/>

SCPHD will not be able to check an individual's position on the state pre-registration tool. After filling out the form, residents will receive an email when a local provider has pulled their name to schedule an appointment.

SCPHD's press release announcing a start date for priority group 2.3:
https://www.phd5.idaho.gov/Documents/Press-Releases/2021/3-5-2020_Vaccine-Essential-Worker.pdf