

# Transylvania County COVID-19 Vaccination Update: 1/18/21

Supplies of the COVID-19 vaccine are limited, so it must be offered in phases. This vaccination campaign will take months, not weeks, but everyone will eventually have access to a tested, safe, and effective vaccine. Variables that will impact our vaccination plan include vaccine supply, ongoing demands with COVID-19 case surges, and the availability of personnel and resources to administer vaccines. In addition to vaccinating those in approved priority groups, public health staff are also busy responding to new COVID-19 cases, providing technical assistance and testing for ongoing outbreaks, and providing other public health duties as required by general statutes. We ask for patience as we navigate this process.



NCDHHS has released new guidance for vaccine distribution to align with federal priorities while empowering local vaccine providers with flexibility to move to the next priority group as they complete phases and have vaccines available. This new guidance expands current eligibility to all healthcare providers with direct patient contact, adults in continuing care retirement communities, and adults 65 years or older.

Transylvania Public Health will continue offering vaccines to people already eligible to receive the vaccine in Phase 1a and Phase 1b and will begin offering vaccines to those eligible under the new Group 1 and Group 2.

Despite the current surge in cases, the 3 Ws have proven to be incredibly effective at protecting people. Most of Transylvania County's cases are associated with settings where people dropped their guard with family members not in their household, co-workers, neighbors, and friends. Be sure to keep practicing protection methods like mask-wearing, handwashing, social distancing, and avoiding groups until everyone has a chance to get the vaccine.

## CURRENT PHASE – GROUP 1: Health Care Workers and Long-Term Care Staff and Residents & Group 2: Adults 65 years or older

Transylvania County is still offering vaccines healthcare workers fighting COVID-19, people giving vaccines, and long-term care facility residents and staff in Phase 1a, as well as adults 75 or older eligible in Phase 1b Group 1.

Transylvania Public Health will now begin offering vaccines to people who are now eligible in the new Group 1 and Group 2 categories. This includes healthcare providers with direct patient contact and anyone 65 years or older.

An estimated 9,700 people in Transylvania County are eligible for vaccine in the new Group 2. It will take several weeks to offer vaccine to everyone in this group. We will continue to offer more appointments each week as supplies allow.

## COMING NEXT – Group 3: Frontline Essential Workers

The new Group 2 includes frontline essential workers. These are people who cannot work from home and are not able to stay distanced from others based on their job duties. The CDC defines essential workers as first responders, corrections officers, food and agricultural workers, postal service workers, manufacturing workers, grocery store workers, public transit workers, education workers, and childcare workers.

A timeline for completing Group 3 will depend on vaccine supplies and the number of people who want a vaccine.

## LATER – Group 4: Adults at High Risk for Exposure and Increased Risk of Severe Illness

Group 4 includes adults under age 64 with chronic health conditions increase the risk of severe illness from COVID-19, people in group living situations, and essential workers.

By the time we get to this group, we anticipate that vaccine supply will be more plentiful and options for vaccinations will be available in places like grocery stores and pharmacies.

## VACCINE ENROLLMENT STEPS

This week, drive-through appointments will be available in community locations on:

- Wednesday, Jan. 20, 8:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. in Rosman
- Thursday, Jan. 21, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. in Brevard
- Friday, Jan. 15, 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in Brevard, coordinated by Blue Ridge Health

People who are eligible to receive the vaccine in Groups 1 and 2 (healthcare workers and people 65 years or older) can make an appointment by phone or online:

- Call 828-884-4007 for assistance making an appointment, 7 am to 7 pm, 7 days a week
- Visit [transylvaniahealth.org](https://transylvaniahealth.org) to make an appointment online at least 24 hours before the desired appointment time

Additional appointments will be scheduled week to week as more vaccine supplies are received. An appointment-based system will be necessary to avoid long lines and delays with limited vaccine supply. Vaccines will not be given to people without an appointment.



For more information and the latest vaccine updates, visit [transylvaniahealth.org](https://transylvaniahealth.org)