



# JOINT NEWS RELEASE

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## Health Officials Cite Supply Challenges for Slow Vaccination Pace

*Less than 500 doses per day available in Marin through February 6*

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**San Rafael, CA** – Marin County’s network of health care partners is coordinating efforts to streamline [COVID-19 vaccine distribution](#) and is committed to moving as quickly as possible to vaccinate the most vulnerable.

Unfortunately, vaccine scarcity is a shared problem.

“We want to set expectations that match our supply,” said Dr. Matt Willis, Marin’s Public Health Officer. “Unfortunately, there’s a mismatch between the number of people expecting the vaccine now and the amount we’ve been given. All of our health care partners have the staff, operations and clinics ready, and all are eager to vaccinate more residents as soon as we receive more doses.”

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Along with counties across the state, Marin is facing a lean week for vaccines. Across all major health care partners combined, including [Marin County Public Health](#), MarinHealth, Kaiser Permanente, and Sutter Health, less than 500 doses per day are available for residents to be vaccinated with their first dose during the week of February 1. That amounts to less than 1% of the county’s population.

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State allocations to local jurisdictions and health care systems are issued weekly, based on a formula designed to ensure fair distribution state-wide. Because all doses received are used quickly, Marin County Public Health routinely requests extra doses beyond its allocation. This process, which distributes doses from counties that are not able to use their allocation, has not yet resulted in extra doses for Marin.

Limited supply limits new appointments, and in some cases, can lead to cancellations of existing appointments. In addition, administering Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccine requires a parallel effort to provide a second dose a few weeks after the first. The need for second doses limits the number of people who can be newly vaccinated each week.

To stretch vaccine availability, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its [COVID-19 vaccine guidance](#) on January 21

to allow for second dose administration up to six weeks (42 days) after the first dose, if the second dose cannot be scheduled in the recommended timeframe – three weeks for Pfizer-BioNTech, four weeks for Moderna. CDC is not advocating for people to delay getting their second dose, but the data from clinical trials support this practice should vaccine supply hamper the ability to administer the second shot on time. While the State of California has not formally adopted this principle, it may be an approach that public health officials and health care providers consider if supply woes continue.

Despite supply bottlenecks, Marin’s network of health care providers has vaccinated the majority of the local health care workforce, and nearly 10% of Marin residents have received at least one dose of vaccine, including some of the most vulnerable residents.

“We have to step back and remember where we were one year ago,” Willis said. “This is a very effective vaccine, and no one would have guessed we’d be in a position to be able to offer this so early in 2021. While production and allocation issues are to be expected during the early stages of implementation, the U.S. is much further ahead of other countries in terms of access.”

Currently, vaccine is available to health care workers and residents of long-term care facilities outlined in Phase 1A, and local residents age 75 and older. More than 23,000 Marin residents are age 75 or older. Therefore, with the current pace of supply, it will take several weeks to offer a first dose to everyone in the group.

“We understand the current vaccination pace is much slower than expected and we continue to advocate for a larger supply,” said Dr. Karin Shavelson, Chief Medical Officer for MarinHealth. “We appreciate everyone’s continued patience and pledge to keep the public updated on progress.”

There are several ways for Marin residents to learn the latest information about vaccine distribution and prepare for when it’s their turn for a shot.

- Visit Marin Public Health’s [vaccine webpage](#)
- Complete Public Health’s [vaccination interest form](#)
- E-subscribe to Public Health’s [daily status updates](#)

In addition, members of local medical networks are encouraged to follow progress on their respective provider webpages:

- [Kaiser Permanente](#)
- [MarinHealth Medical Network](#)
- [Sutter Health](#)
- [Marin Community Clinics](#)

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