



KALAMAZOO COUNTY GOVERNMENT

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**NEWS RELEASE FOR
IMMEDIATE RELEASE**
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Kalamazoo County Moving Forward with Next Phase of COVID-19 Vaccination Efforts

Health Department and healthcare systems start plans to vaccinate 65 years and older

Kalamazoo, MI – Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department along with healthcare partners Ascension Borgess and Bronson Healthcare are working collaboratively to provide COVID-19 vaccines as quickly as possible to all those who are eligible and interested throughout the community. While cooperative planning for vaccination has been underway for months, all agencies will start offering limited vaccine appointments to those over the age of 65.

The new guidance issued by Michigan Department of Health and Human Services on January 11, allowed for those in the [next phase of eligibility](#) to start receiving the vaccine if supply was available. Per the CDC website, those individuals 65 years and older have higher risk factors in both hospitalizations and deaths if they are diagnosed with COVID-19. By prioritizing vaccination to this group, Kalamazoo County is protecting the most vulnerable populations in the community.

To reach the populations in these next phases, particularly those over the age of 65, and schedule them for vaccine appointments, the **Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department** will be working from the pre-registration waitlist forms submitted. To date, there are 15,500 people registered on the waitlist. The health department will start scheduling appointments from the waitlist by email and phone. Please be patient, as it will take time to schedule appointments. Not everyone on the waitlist can be scheduled at this time due to limited vaccine supply. It may be days or weeks before you receive a scheduling link or phone call.

If you are a patient of an **Ascension Medical Group** physician, are over the age of 65, and have visited your physician twice over the past 24 months, you will be contacted with information about setting up a vaccination appointment, if you have not been contacted already, as vaccine supply allows. You do not need to register on the Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department website.

Bronson Healthcare is currently continuing vaccinations of healthcare workers in Phase 1A as well as offering vaccine appointments to adults 65 years and older at four regional locations, including one in Kalamazoo County. Vaccines are given by appointment only based on the number of doses of vaccine available. At this time, all scheduling is being done through [Bronson MyChart](#). Visit bronsonhealth.com for updates on vaccine clinic dates and times. Bronson is also making plans to open additional clinic locations.

HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

311 E. Alcott St. | Kalamazoo, MI 49001

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All vaccination clinics are by appointment only and are not open for walk-ins. It is important to note that vaccine supply received from the state is still limited in Kalamazoo County. As more supply becomes available, more vaccination clinics and appointments will become available.

Community members should not call their health care provider's office for vaccination scheduling or show up at the Health Department anticipating getting their vaccination without an appointment. The most efficient way to indicate interest in receiving a COVID-19 vaccine is to complete the [pre-registration wait list forms](#) available on the Kalamazoo County Health & Community Services Department website (for those over the age of 65 and employers of essential workers). We are encouraging people to assist family and friends without internet access or email with the online pre-registration and waitlist process, if possible, as that is the quickest way to receive notification to register for a vaccine appointment. Individuals 65 and older may also call COVID-19 Call Center at 269-373-5200 to be placed on the waitlist. **You can add your name to the waitlist through the online form or by calling. We are experiencing extremely high call volume even with a fully staffed call center. We encourage people to complete the online form so that the phone lines remain open to those who do not have a way to complete the form online or do not have technology to complete the form.**

Please select one organization to make an appointment for vaccination. Booking vaccine appointments with multiple organizations has a negative impact for our community. It will delay access to vaccination appointments for others who qualify. It can also lead to wasting vaccine, limiting supplies for other community members. Please be respectful of others seeking vaccination, and those coordinating the efforts and register with one organization.

In addition, all agencies are targeting essential workers by coordinating directly with employers and other partner agencies. Any employer whose employees are eligible in Phase 1A or Phase 1B but have not yet been vaccinated through a local health system should complete the health department's [online form](#). A lead point of contact should complete the form for the employer. This person will be contacted by the Kalamazoo County Health Department, Ascension Borgess, or Bronson Healthcare and will be responsible for coordinating appointments with the health system for employees based on vaccine availability.

Important points:

- Vaccination is not available at the Health Department and is provided by appointment only at vaccination sites. Do NOT show up at the health department or any vaccination site without an appointment.
- The most up-to-date information is at www.kalcounty.com/covid19 and www.facebook.com/KalamazooCountyHCS. We will notify the public via press releases, social media, and website.
- Kalamazoo County Government's website can be converted to Spanish, French, and Arabic. On any county website, in the top right-hand corner under the social media icons, you will see "Translate". Click on this and select a language. The pre-registration waitlist form will also translate to this language.
- If you are eligible because of your work (a critical healthcare infrastructure or frontline essential worker), information may also come through your employer. The Health

Department is actively communicating and coordinating efforts with the employers of eligible workers. Those employees should expect scheduling information through their employers.

- Please reserve phone calls for those who cannot easily access online information. The health department's COVID-19 Call Center is 269-373-5200.

Additional Resources:

- [Kalamazoo County Health Department Vaccination Website](#)
- [Michigan updated 1B vaccination information](#)
- [Michigan Prioritization Guidance](#)
- [Michigan Vaccine FAQ document](#)
- [Michigan.gov/COVIDVaccine](#)

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Kalamazoo County Government
Health & Community Services Department

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