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COVID-19 vaccination program enrollment opens for Douglas County healthcare employers

LAWRENCE – Douglas County healthcare employers can now enroll in the county COVID-19 vaccination program, which will aid in local planning efforts for distribution once an FDA-approved vaccine is available in Kansas.

The [online sign-up form](#) is available at LDCHealth.org/coronavirus and douglascountyks.org/coronavirus.

The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) estimates roughly 6,000 healthcare workers and 1,300 hospital employees in Douglas County would qualify to receive the vaccine in the initial phase, if they opt-in to receive the vaccine once it's approved and available.

Under the state's [COVID-19 Vaccine Plan](#), KDHE is expected to receive nearly 24,000 doses in the first shipment of the vaccine, which will come from Pfizer. The shipment is expected in mid-December. Additional vaccine is expected the following week, with upwards of 150,000 doses expected by the end of the month, according to KDHE.

The initial vaccine distribution will be geared towards healthcare providers and long-term care residents, according to the state plan and in line with CDC recommendations. As vaccine supplies increase, additional populations will be targeted, with the general population expected by late spring/early summer.

"We are asking all healthcare employers to enroll now to let us know how many employees they have who would qualify for the first phase of our vaccination plan," said Charlie Bryan, Business Systems Analyst for Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health and Chair of the Unified Command's Vaccination Planning Unit. "Employees will receive instructions for opting in or opting out, and those who opt in will receive additional instructions for pre-registration and scheduling once the vaccine is available."

The state plan defines those eligible to opt-in to the first phase as healthcare personnel paid and unpaid, who are likely to be exposed to or treat people with COVID-19 or infectious materials and are unable to work from home.

Healthcare workers seeking more information about the vaccine approval process can view [this resource kit](#) at LDCHealth.org. Unified Command partners will announce the enrollment plans for other priority groups in coming weeks, Bryan said.