

FROM THE OFFICE OF
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Governor Ron DeSantis Provides Update on COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan & New Therapeutics

Tallahassee, Fla. – Today, Governor Ron DeSantis provided an update regarding Florida's COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan, as well as new therapeutic treatments that are available to those most vulnerable to the virus. Florida is prepared to distribute vaccines pending approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Watch the Governor's update by clicking the image below or clicking [HERE](#).



Today's update follows the Governor's recent trip to Washington, D.C. where he met with U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Alex Azar, Operation Warp Speed Director for Supply, Production and Distribution Paul Ostrowski, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Director Dr. Robert Redfield, HHS Assistant Secretary for Preparedness

and Response Dr. Robert Kadlec and Director of the CDC Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response Dr. Stephen Redd.

Text from Governor DeSantis' video message as written is provided below:

Hello, this is Governor Ron DeSantis.

This month has brought promising news regarding therapeutics and vaccines to combat COVID-19.

The State of Florida has been working to procure the new treatment for our hospitals and has also made plans to assist in the distribution of a safe and effective vaccine, which we believe will be delivered relatively soon.

I've also been able to meet with key officials involved in Operation Warp Speed in Washington and have been able to get key questions answered for the state of Florida.

I know there has been a lot of discussion about the vaccines, and rightfully so, it's important. But I think the new therapeutic developed by Eli Lilly, and is approved for emergency use by the FDA, is also very significant.

The treatment is a monoclonal antibody cocktail. It is administered through an IV. It takes about an hour for the IV to be administered, and then an hour to observe the patient afterwards. It is best used for people who are at high-risk of severe complications from COVID-19.

The key is to deliver the IV as soon in the infection as possible. This will be people who show up to an emergency room, are developing symptoms but are not yet at a critical state, where they would be in an intensive care unit.

Data from clinical trials found a 70% reduction in hospitalized patients who utilized this treatment. We also know that a similar cocktail is being developed by the company Regeneron. That is currently pending before the FDA for emergency use authorization. We think that may also come in the relatively near future. Of course, that would also mean more supply of this particular treatment for folks.

We surveyed all hospitals in Florida to determine demand. We sent that information to the federal government and the Health and Human Services department used that information and have now sent over 3,000 doses of the treatment directly to hospitals. This has arrived

just within the past few days, and they plan on sending a similar amount every week for the foreseeable future.

I've spoken with a number of hospital CEOs and I'm pleased to report that many have already received the treatment and are moving forward administering the treatment.

We are going to continue to work with hospitals and other providers to ensure that qualifying individuals have access to this treatment.

Now, the vaccine news has been particularly heartening that has come out in the last couple weeks. Since July, we in the state of Florida have been actively planning and preparing for vaccine distribution, including by purchasing necessary supplies.

To date, we have purchased 5 million syringes, 5 million needles and 5 million alcohol swabs.

Both Pfizer and Moderna have reported vaccines with 95% effectiveness. Those will hopefully within the next few weeks receive FDA approval. The Pfizer vaccine is one that needs to be stored in negative 70-degree temperatures.

The state of Florida has identified 5 different hospital systems who have the ability to store the vaccine at those temperatures and administer that to the qualifying individuals.

The Moderna vaccine can be used in normal refrigeration and does not require those extreme low temperatures. That will potentially provide more flexibility.

Right now, the best estimate that the federal government has is that by the end of December, pending FDA approval, there will be roughly 40 million doses of these two vaccines available. 25 million for Pfizer and 15 million for Moderna. Each individual requires two doses. That would mean there will be enough vaccine for 20 million Americans by the end of December.

The good thing about this is millions of doses are ready to ship as we speak. As soon as the FDA approves, they will then go out within the next 24 hours. We expect our hospitals, hopefully, to receive these within the next 3 to 6 weeks. It is all contingent on when the FDA approves.

Shortly thereafter, or maybe even at the same time that hospitals are receiving the vaccine, both CVS and Walgreens will also begin receiving the vaccine to administer to residents of long-term care facilities, who are of course our most vulnerable citizens when it comes to COVID-19.

So far, nearly 2,000 long-term care facilities have registered so that they can start getting their residents vaccinated as soon as the vaccine arrives.

As we move forward, my administration is going to continue to work hand in hand with our federal partners, and we will provide you updates as soon as we have them.

In fact, I was just in Washington, D.C. meeting with the secretary of HHS and the director of the CDC to ensure that the State of Florida is fully prepared to distribute the vaccine as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Our goal is to make all safe and effective COVID vaccines available to Floridians who want them, but the state will not mandate that Floridians take these vaccines. That is going to be the choice of each and every Floridian.

I do believe that these breakthroughs represent probably the greatest rays of hope that we have seen since the pandemic began. They offer the prospect of saving thousands and thousands of lives, and to potentially bring this pandemic to an end.

Thank you all for all you have been doing. I know it has been tough. We are going to keep working hard to support everyone.

God bless you all.

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