



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Vaccine Supply Shortages Prompt Public Health Leaders Throughout the Bay Area to Urge Prioritization of Older Adults for Vaccination**

**Bay Area, CA** – For the time being, the scarcity of COVID-19 vaccination doses throughout the San Francisco Bay Area has led health officials in eight jurisdictions to urge all health systems to prioritize shots for patients aged 65 and older because of the virus’ high mortality rate within that group.

County health departments and collaborating health care partners are coordinating efforts to streamline vaccine distribution and administration, moving as quickly as possible to provide shots to the most vulnerable residents. Marin, Napa, Santa Cruz, and Solano counties are prioritizing residents age 75 and older. Similarly, Contra Costa, San Francisco, San Mateo, and Santa Clara counties are prioritizing people age 65 and older. This is in addition to continuing to vaccinate Phase 1A-eligible health care workers, many of whom are now expecting their second doses.

Across the region, most COVID-19 deaths have been in the 65-and-up age group. Thus, focusing vaccination efforts on those at greatest risk of death will have the biggest immediate impact on saving lives.

<b>Jurisdiction</b>	<b>Proportion of COVID-19 related deaths of county residents 65+ as of 1/28/2021</b>
Contra Costa	82%
Marin	92%
Napa	79%
San Francisco	83%
San Mateo	84%
Santa Clara	81%
Santa Cruz	90%
Solano	78%

The Bay Area continues to receive only a small fraction of the vaccines needed to vaccinate residents aged 65 and older, much less the broader occupation-based groups the state has included in Phase 1B Tier 1, including educators, food and agricultural workers, and emergency services personnel. Across the Bay Area, weekly dose allocations from the State of California –



based on a formula designed to ensure fair distribution statewide – have slowed compared to shipments in December and early January. With the current pace of supply, it will take several weeks to offer a first dose to all older adults who would like to be vaccinated.

“The problem is that the supply is massively inadequate for the demand,” said Dr. Scott Morrow, San Mateo County’s health officer. “We all want to go faster, but until this supply issue is ameliorated, we won’t be able to.”

Limited vaccine supply is resulting in a widespread inability to make 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.

For the latest information about vaccine distribution, please visit [smchealth.org/covidvaccine](https://smchealth.org/covidvaccine).

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