



**Quad Cities COVID-19 Coalition
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Feb. 11, 2021

Current COVID-19 case count

Scott County – Total of 16,636

Total deaths in Scott County: 194

Rock Island County – 33 new cases since Wednesday; total of 12,544

Currently in hospital in Rock Island County: 13

Total deaths in Rock Island County: 302

Today's call

A video recording of today's media briefing can be found at <https://www.scotcountyiowa.com/health/covid19/news>

Illinois now giving priority to second doses

Remarks from Nita Ludwig, administrator, Rock Island County Health Department

The Illinois Department of Public Health made two changes to the vaccine rollout plan this week that will have a serious impact on how and when doses will be available to the majority of our residents.

First, local health departments will be allocated fewer first doses of vaccine to make sure that everyone who already got their first dose will get their second dose, too. By now, national and state public health leaders had expected that vaccine would be more plentiful and that second dose shipments would arrive in time. This isn't the case. Our allocation remains small. As of this briefing, we don't yet know the number of doses that we will receive for next week. We know we will have the 900 set aside for Tuesday's clinic, and any remaining doses will be shared with our partners, including Community Health Care for its weekend clinics.

We already set the second-dose priority for next week. Tuesday's clinic is for those who received their first dose at our Jan. 19 clinic. Everyone who got their first dose then should have been able to sign up for a time slot by 3 p.m. When I looked just before this briefing, there were a few slots left. Any slots that remain will be posted on our Facebook page and our website at 10 a.m. Friday. We suggest going to the Facebook link each time we post one because the social media network has the capacity to handle the volume of traffic expected. We plan to follow this pattern of Thursday second-dose opportunities followed by Friday first-dose slots for the foreseeable future.

This change, by default, will reduce the number of opportunities for people to get their first doses through us, but there is some good news. Our pharmacy and healthcare partners are starting to get shipments directly from IDPH. UnityPoint-Trinity, Genesis and Community Health Care are starting to reach out to their patients. However, our partners strongly request that patients do not call providers' offices and instead wait to be contacted. First dose slots could be available at:

- Hy-Vee: <https://www.hy-vee.com/my-pharmacy/covid-vaccine-consent>
- Walgreens: <https://www.walgreens.com/findcare/vaccination/covid-19>
- Jewel Osco: www.albertsons.com/covidclinic

The bottom line: We still have more people who want the vaccine than we have doses, but the number of ways to be vaccinated is growing.

The second major change is both good and difficult news. Starting Feb. 25, IDPH is opening vaccine opportunities to Illinoisans with certain underlying health conditions, including:

- Cancer
- Chronic Kidney Disease
- COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)
- Diabetes
- Heart Condition
- Immunocompromised State from a Solid Organ Transplant
- Obesity
- Pregnancy
- Pulmonary Disease
- Sickle Cell Disease

As you can imagine, we are pleased to be able to offer vaccine protection to people with these serious health conditions. However, we are worried that expanding eligibility without greatly expanding supply will lead to more frustration. We are trying to manage your expectations. You will have a chance to receive your vaccination, but you could be weeks away from getting a time slot at our clinics or with our pharmacy partners. Please understand that public health and our partners are working hard on your behalf and that this process is frustrating for all of us.

Just this afternoon, we learned that Illinois' first case of COVID-19 variant B.1.351 first identified in South Africa has been detected in Rock Island County. Having this new variant in our community underscores the need to take personal precautions to prevent further spread. Please continue to wear your mask when away from home, watch your distance when around others and wash your hands frequently.

Now, for some good news. IDPH is keeping track of how many doses are given in each county and bases it on each county's total population. IDPH shows that more than 13,500 doses have been administered in our county and that almost 3,000 have gotten both doses. We have to

trust IDPH numbers because many partners are reporting into the state's system. When allowing that children are not yet approved to receive the vaccine, almost 12 percent of eligible county residents have received at least one dose. This is a herculean effort, and we are so proud of our staff, our partners and our volunteers. We thank you for your continued patience and understand that this process has been frustrating at times. We're frustrated, too. But knowing that almost 12 percent of people have at least some protection from this virus gives us hope that we eventually will be able to enjoy all that life allows. Until then, please continue to wear your mask, watch your distance and wash your hands. Each dose given brings us closer to what we all desperately want.

Rock Island County seniors call-in line starts Monday

Beginning Monday, Feb. 15, Alternatives for the Older Adult, Inc., will start taking calls from ***older adults (65 and older) who do not have the ability to register online*** for vaccinations. The Alternatives' Vaccine Support Center will provide answers to questions, assist to book appointments (if available) and/or add names to waiting lists to be registered when open appointments are available.

Important details:

- Vaccine Support Center will open Monday, Feb. 15
- Calls will be taken between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.
- A toll-free number to call will be announced as soon as possible. Please watch for information from Alternatives. The QC COVID Coalition will announce it, too, as soon as we know it.
- We may not get you registered, but will get you on a waiting list.
- Be patient as you know the lines may be busy, particularly in the first couple of weeks.

CASI working through calls from older Scott County residents

Remarks from Edward Rivers, director, Scott County Health Department

We announced on Tuesday that of the doses of vaccine that Scott County receives, the supply for the 65+ community will be given to Genesis, UnityPoint Health–Trinity, and Community Health Care to be administered through their clinics.

These health systems have plans in place to get the 65+ population vaccinated. If you are a patient of these health systems, please do not call your doctor to get scheduled. You will be contacted to schedule a vaccine appointment when it is your turn.

If you've tried to contact CASI, please be patient. Tell them you want to receive the vaccine. Leave a voicemail with your name and number. Their staff will be in touch with you to gather information. They are receiving a high volume of calls and are working their way through those who have reached out.

For people who have already received a first dose of COVID-19 vaccine from one of the Scott County Health Department's clinics at Sears, our announcement of vaccine going to healthcare providers does not affect you. We will be giving you your second vaccination and will be contacting you via email for your second dose.

People who have scheduled appointments for first- and second-dose vaccines through Walgreens also won't be affected by this change. The limited, one-time supply of vaccine Walgreens had available is independent from what we receive for Scott County.

As a reminder, Scott County is receiving approximately 2,250 doses of vaccine per week, for the entire county. As much as we would like to vaccinate all of our 65+ population and Phase 1B Tier 1 populations quickly, we are still just in week 2 of this phase. It is still going to take a number of weeks with this level of vaccine supply.

Whether you are vaccinated, hope to be vaccinated, or won't be vaccinated, wearing a face mask is just as important now as it has ever been. Please continue to mask up when you are out and about and around others outside of your household. Please continue to social distance when you are around others. Please avoid large group gatherings and events. We are fortunate that our daily number of cases has decreased. However, there are new variants of the virus that are circulating in Iowa. These are reminders that the pandemic isn't over. It will take a number of months before these public health measures can be relaxed. For the time being, let's keep doing what we are doing to protect us all.

More information

- www.TogetherQC.com
- coronavirus.iowa.gov
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19>
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/regionmetrics?regionID=2>
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/countymetrics?county=Rock%20Island>
- <https://www2.illinois.gov/idoc/facilities/Pages/Covid19Response.aspx>
- <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/long-term-care-facility-outbreaks-covid-19>

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