



# News Release

**For immediate release**

January 25, 2021

---

## **Unified Health Command Announces COVID-19 Vaccination Availability for the Week of January 25, 2021**

**Billings, MT** – The number of first doses of COVID-19 vaccine available to the community for the week of January 25, 2021 is less than 1,100 doses. Last week, Unified Health Command healthcare providers (Billings Clinic, St. Vincent Healthcare, and RiverStone Health) received approximately 2,100 first doses and vaccination appointments were filled within hours of announcing availability.

“This is certainly disappointing news that our COVID-19 vaccine allocation is less this week than it was last week,” said John Felton, Yellowstone County’s Health Officer and President and CEO of RiverStone Health. “Like communities across the state and nation, vaccine availability is woefully inadequate for demand and on a week-to-week basis, continues to be unpredictable.”

This week, only Billings Clinic and RiverStone Health are able to provide community COVID-19 vaccination clinics. St. Vincent Healthcare did not receive any first doses of COVID-19 vaccine from the State of Montana.

Billings Clinic will be administering vaccine on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday this week. For an appointment call 406.435.5744. Telephone scheduling for new vaccination appointments is available Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 8 a.m. to noon or until appointments are filled. If you are a Billings Clinic patient, you can schedule an appointment through PatientConnect at [www.billingsclinic.com/patientconnect](http://www.billingsclinic.com/patientconnect). While there is no charge for the vaccine, an administration fee will be billed to insurance.

To schedule a vaccination appointment at RiverStone Health Public Health for Thursday afternoon, call 406.651.6596 or schedule at <https://forms.gle/HQJwt5hbTjDeaNMh7>. RiverStone Health is able to vaccinate people 18 and older because it received only the Moderna vaccine. Public Health is not charging an administration fee.

No walk-in COVID-19 vaccinations are being given. Further, UHC healthcare providers do not have a waiting list for vaccination appointments and ask for patience as each facility works to get vaccine quickly and safely distributed.

Please wait to receive a COVID-19 vaccine if you have received any other vaccinations 14 days prior. After being vaccinated for COVID-19, do not receive any other vaccines for 14 days. Individuals who have received monoclonal antibody treatment should defer COVID-19 vaccination for at least 90 days.

Following Montana's COVID-19 vaccine allocation plan, Yellowstone County is vaccinating Phase 1A and Phase 1B. These phases include healthcare personnel, first responders and staff and residents at long-term care facilities, and people in the following categories:

- Individuals age 70 and older
- Individuals age 16-69 with high-risk medical conditions.
  - Cancer
  - Chronic kidney disease
  - COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
  - Down Syndrome
  - Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
  - Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
  - Severe Obesity (BMI  $\geq$  40 kg/m<sup>2</sup>)
  - Sickle cell disease
  - Type 1&2 Diabetes mellitus
  - On a case by case basis, medical providers may include individuals with other conditions that place them at elevated risk for COVID-19 complications
- American Indians and other people of color at elevated risk for severe COVID-19 complications

At 95% efficacy after the second dose, COVID-19 vaccines offer extraordinary protection against the virus. A safety board approved every vaccine study and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) carefully reviewed data from every phase of every vaccine trial.

Both the Moderna and Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines have been granted Emergency Use Authorization (EAU) from the FDA. Both require two vaccine doses spaced 28 and 21 days apart, respectively. The vaccines are not interchangeable and recipients must be vaccinated with the same vaccine type as the first dose, from the same organization. For more information about the COVID-19 vaccines, logon to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html>

###

