



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH & WELFARE

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Vaccine Advisory Committee recommends Idaho accept early distribution of COVID-19 vaccine

The Idaho COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Committee on Friday recommended the state accept what's called early distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine. Doing so would allow the vaccine to reach enrolled providers 24 to 48 hours sooner than the standard distribution process.

"This would not compromise our commitment to providing a safe and effective vaccine for Idahoans," said Sarah Leeds, Idaho Immunization Program manager. "And it would help us get a small number of doses of the vaccine here sooner, so we could administer it to some Idahoans sooner."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is asking every state in the nation if it wants to accept early distribution of the vaccine. The decision is ultimately up to each state's governor.

If Idaho proceeds with early distribution, then a limited number of doses of the vaccine would be sent to the state to be stored once an Emergency Use Authorization is secured from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), but it would not be administered in the state until a recommendation is issued by the federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

First, the manufacturer of the vaccine will apply for FDA Emergency Use Authorization, which is anticipated to occur as soon as Nov. 16. The FDA's Vaccine's & Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) will then meet within at least two weeks to review the request and make a recommendation to the FDA. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) will then hold an emergency meeting to consider recommendations for use of the vaccine, which could occur as soon as Dec. 1 if the process goes according to plan. The vaccine in Idaho would be distributed to providers who are enrolled through the state in CDC's COVID-19 Vaccine Program following the ACIP's recommendation. After ACIP's recommendation, additional vaccine would be shipped directly to providers from the vaccine manufacturer.

The vaccine will likely be available first to healthcare providers, essential workers, adults 65 years and older, and adults under the age of 65 with high-risk conditions.

The Idaho COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Committee was formed by the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare at the direction of Gov. Brad Little in October and its members represent stakeholders from across Idaho, including the tribes, priority populations, healthcare systems and providers, and immunization organizations. Learn more about the committee at <https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/idaho-covid-19-vaccine-advisory-committee/>.

The goals of the state's vaccine program are to reduce transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19, as well as severe illness and death; preserve a functioning healthcare system; recover functioning of society and economic recovery; protect people at risk who have access and functional needs; ensure equitable distribution of the vaccine within the prioritized tiers; and ensure transparency throughout the implementation of the state's vaccine plan.

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