

# VACCINE: Niagara County POD staying in Lockport, as largest shipment is expected

Size of clinic necessitates staying at Kenan Arena

Niagara County Public Health Director Daniel Stapleton on Wednesday announced Niagara County is expecting to receive 6,500 first doses of COVID-19 vaccination next week – by far the most the county has ever received for a single week. The county is expecting 5,000 Johnson & Johnson vaccines and 1,500 Moderna that must be dispensed in that week. These doses would nearly double the total amount of vaccine doses Niagara County has received to date.

“As with everything regarding COVID-19, the situation can change in a minute and that happened last night when I was notified by New York state that we would be getting this huge shipment of vaccine, which is great news for our community,” Stapleton said.

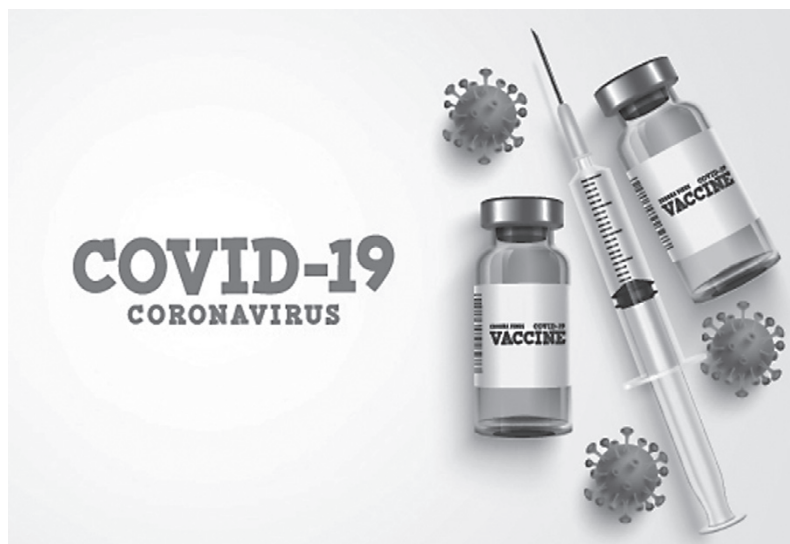
He explained that, with such a large volume of vaccines coming, the NCDOH will not be moving its

point-of-dispensing (POD) vaccination clinic from the Kenan Arena in Lockport to Gratwick Fire Hose Co. No. 6 in North Tonawanda next week, as had been planned. Stapleton explained the available space at Gratwick, in concert with the need to maintain a socially distanced operation inside, limits the maximum daily throughput to 850 vaccinations per day.

The venue at the Kenan Arena has sufficient space for the health department to safely accomplish up to 2,500 vaccinations per day.

“High-volume point-of-dispensing operations require significant staffing and support from our staff, volunteers and partners,” Stapleton said. “Therefore, we are prioritizing our efforts on one high-volume POD at a time to ensure the largest number of individuals are vaccinated in the shortest period of time.”

In addition, all participants with



a second dose currently scheduled at Gratwick should have received an email from the NCDOH notifying them that they will now receive their second dose at the Kenan Arena on the same date and time as originally scheduled

at Gratwick.

Stapleton stressed vaccine appointments will not be available until the vaccine is actually received by the NCDOH.

“We are not yet accepting appointments, because our policy

has consistently been not to schedule until we have the vaccine in hand to avoid having to cancel appointments if it does not arrive,” he said. “As soon as we confirm receipt, we will make an announcement that appointments are available. Residents can then go to niagaracounty.com, click on the blue box for vaccination info, and then scroll down to step 1 to schedule.”

Stapleton said the NCDOH had 158 vaccine appointments available for this week that were booked in six minutes last Friday.

“Hopefully, people who have been frustrated trying to get an appointment will find better success,” he said. “A shipment of this size is the first step to really building critical mass toward herd immunity, but we don’t know if this is just a one week occurrence or whether we can begin to expect significant shipments like this each week going forward.”

## Niagara County Department of Health removes quarantine requirement for fully vaccinated persons in alignment with updated guidance

The Niagara County Department of Health issued an update Thursday regarding quarantine requirements, to reflect the updated U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and New York state guidance.

“Quarantine will no longer be required for fully vaccinated domestic travelers and fully vaccinated individuals with a close contact exposure,” Public Health Director Daniel. Stapleton said.

A person is considered fully vaccinated at least two weeks after receiving the second dose of a two-dose vaccine (e.g. Moderna or Pfizer) or one dose of a single-dose vaccine (e.g. Johnson & Johnson). Domestic travelers are no longer required to quarantine or test-out within 90 days of full vaccination. International travelers should continue to follow CDC quarantine guidance at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/map-and-travel-notices.html>.

Fully vaccinated individuals, who have been in close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 positive case, are no longer required to quarantine within 90 days after the second shot as long as they have no symptoms of COVID-19 since their expose. There are some exceptions to the new quarantine guidance. According to the CDC, fully vaccinated inpatients and residents in health care settings

should continue to quarantine following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. This exception is due to the unknown vaccine effectiveness in this population, the higher risk of severe disease and death, and challenges with social distancing in health care settings.

Those who do not meet those qualifying standards should follow the New York state quarantine guidance at <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/travel-large-gatherings-and-quarantines>.

Director of Public Health Planning and Emergency Preparedness Elise Pignatora said, “We have conducted over 7,200 first-dose vaccinations at our point-of-

dispensing (POD) operations.”

Stapleton said, “While we continue to prioritize populations within the NYS eligibility groups, we remain hopeful that, with more vaccine, we will be able to reach the larger community in

the near future.”

NCDOH said that, despite being vaccinated, individuals should continue to follow current guidance to protect themselves and others until herd immunity is reached. Stapleton emphasized, “Everyone,

despite being vaccinated, should continue to wear a mask, stay at least 6 feet from others, avoid crowds, wash their hands and follow current NYS travel advisory requirements.”

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