



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bremer County COVID-19 Vaccine Expanded Eligibility Update

BREMER COUNTY, IA – The Bremer County Health Department (BCHD) is making changes to COVID-19 vaccine allocation and distribution strategies for county vaccine, effective March 8, 2021. These changes are due to the [announcement](#) on March 4 by the Iowa Department of Public Health which expands eligibility criteria for COVID-19 vaccine to individuals 16-64 with [underlying health conditions](#) beginning March 8. Under this expanded eligibility criteria, most Iowans will be eligible for vaccine, therefore BCHD has made significant changes in vaccine allocation and distribution plans.

Beginning March 8, vaccine allocated to Bremer County vaccine providers through BCHD will include individuals 16-64 with underlying conditions. Vaccine will be prioritized to adults 65 and older and to individuals age 16 to 64 with underlying conditions. Beginning March 13, vaccine will also be assigned to Phase 1A and Phase 1B Tier 1-5 populations.

The weekly allocation of COVID-19 vaccine to BCHD is anticipated to remain stable with 400 doses per week through March. This vaccine allocation is divided between four different Bremer County vaccine providers every week.

Vaccine continues to be in short supply. Not everyone who is eligible for a vaccine will be able to schedule an appointment at this time. BCHD is working with all Bremer County vaccine providers to ensure vaccine will eventually be available to everyone who wants it.

Adults 65 and older and individuals age 16 to 64 with underlying conditions

Bremer County healthcare providers and pharmacies will determine their own process for offering available vaccine to their patients. It is anticipated the majority of patient populations will now be eligible for vaccine under the new criteria. Healthcare providers and pharmacies know their patient populations best, and are the most appropriate entity to prioritize available vaccine within their patient population. These providers will continue to reach out to you to schedule vaccine appointments.

Pharmacies participating in the [Retail Pharmacy Program](#) may offer vaccine to [all eligible individuals](#) beginning March 8. These appointments will be on a first come, first serve basis to all eligible populations. To schedule appointments with these participating pharmacies, visit: <https://vaccinate.iowa.gov/>



1B Tiers 1 through 5

Due to expanded eligibility criteria, most Iowans will now be able to obtain vaccinations without being linked to an employer. Effective March 14, all Phase 1B Tier populations are eligible for county allocated vaccine. BCHD will open up eligibility to all tiers, as it will no longer be possible to track the number of people in each tier who still need vaccine given the likelihood of previously being vaccinated due to meeting the expanded eligibility criteria.

All businesses that previously contacted BCHD and completed business registry information will be contacted with information on how to schedule an appointment or will be matched with a vaccine provider when vaccine is available.

For additional information

- Visit the BCHD COVID-19 vaccine website at [BremerCounty.iowa.gov](https://www.bremercounty.iowa.gov) or call 319-352-0082.
- Older adults can call 2-1-1 or 800-244-7431 to access a vaccine navigator for help with scheduling an appointment or transportation needs.
- Older adults may also call their local [Area Agency on Aging](#) at 1-866-468-7887 for COVID-19 vaccine questions, transportation, and scheduling.

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