

Pennsylvania Expands COVID-19 Vaccination Eligibility Requirements

Every adult in Pennsylvania will qualify for COVID-19 vaccines starting April 19, and emergency responders, grocery workers and others will be able to set up shots immediately, Gov. Tom Wolf's administration announced Wednesday.

Acting Health Secretary Alison Beam said the new timeline is possible because the state's rate of vaccinations has quickened.

"The vaccine landscape continues to evolve as the federal government is increasing allocations to more retail pharmacy chains across the country," Beam said in a statement. "To ensure that vaccine continues to get to people efficiently and equitably, Pennsylvania is adapting its plan to allow workers in targeted industries to access any of the three vaccines." The state is currently averaging about 83,000 vaccinations a day, she said.

The announcement was made by the Health Department and the COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force, which includes state lawmakers.

Starting Wednesday, vaccine appointments are being expanded to include police, corrections officers and other law enforcement; volunteer and professional firefighters; grocery employees; and food and farm workers.

On Monday, April 5, everyone in Phase 1B will be eligible, a group that includes postal, public transit and manufacturing employees.

Next will be Phase 1C starting April 12, which includes workers in transportation and logistics, water and wastewater, communications and media, public health, legal services, finance and construction.

Everyone else can start making vaccine appointments on April 19.