



**For Release:** March 30, 2021

**Contact:** Contra Costa Health Services Media Line, 925-608-5463

*Note to Editors: We will be having a virtual press availability today at 3 p.m. to answer questions about the release below. Please [register in advance](#) to attend the event.*

### **Contra Costa Opens Eligibility to those 16+** *Everyone is Encouraged to Request Appointments Now*

Contra Costa Health Services (CCHS) encourages everyone who lives or works in the county age 16 or older to request an appointment to receive a COVID-16 vaccine.

Contra Costa County Health Director Anna Roth announced to the Board of Supervisors today that an increased vaccine supply from the state and federal governments means there is capacity to open eligibility to people in the 16-49 age range. CCHS currently has thousands of appointments available at its community clinics this week.

Recently, Contra Costa County began receiving additional vaccine supply from the U.S. government for its numerous federally-qualified health centers. This week, the County has received 84,500 total doses of vaccine from the state and federal governments – 30,000 more than just the week before.

The move will expand eligibility to another 375,000 county residents who have not yet been vaccinated. The County will continue to prioritize giving appointments to those living in low-income areas hardest hit by COVID. It is also planning to begin accepting walk-ins at the Richmond Auditorium and Bay Point Health Center with additional locations coming online in the near future.

Going forward, Contra Costa County will no longer refer to eligibility phases or tiers in determining who gets the vaccine. Doses are available to anyone for whom the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has approved the use of vaccine.

“Since we gave the first dose in our county on Dec. 15, getting vaccine to everyone and anyone has been our top priority,” said Anna Roth, Contra Costa County Health Director. “Removing barriers of all kinds, including confusing eligibility criteria is an important step in furthering our equity goals. This is an important day.”

CCHS is taking additional steps to eliminate equity barriers, including:

- soon eliminating a complicated registration form used to determine eligibility,
- piloting walk-in clinics that eliminate the need for advance appointments,
- continued prioritization of appointments for people who live in communities in the lowest quartile of the California Healthy Places Index,
- prioritizing those at highest risk of severe illness and death because of age,

- increasing capacity at mobile clinics by as much as four-fold at some locations.

Appointments for those age 16-64 are only available through CCHS and cannot be booked using the state's My Turn portal until the state announces vaccine eligibility to this age category. Please register online at [cchealth.org/coronavirus](https://cchealth.org/coronavirus) or by calling 1-833-VAX-COCO (1-833-829-2626).

"Governor Gavin Newsom announced last week that his goal was to move the state quickly through the eligibility tiers," said Roth. "We agree and applaud this goal. We have appointments to fill. By expanding eligibility now, we can ensure that no appointments go unused."

CCHS does anticipate a sharp rise in requests with this additional eligibility, and long delays are likely on the appointment request phone line. Anyone who is able to do so is encouraged to use the [online request form](#) instead of phoning – it will save you time.

People who live in Contra Costa communities that are disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including communities of color, are especially encouraged to request an appointment today.

Try the [Help Your Neighbor](#) page for tips to help you assist a friend or loved one through the appointment request process, especially if they have a hard time using the internet or smartphones.

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Contra Costa Health Services | [cchealth.org](https://cchealth.org)

