

Williams County Health District

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Community Talking Points

January 7, 2021

- COVID-19 cases continue to increase in Williams County. In the past 7 days (Dec. 30th-Jan. 6th), there have been 190 new cases, 7 hospitalizations, and 3 deaths. As of 12/31, Williams County remains level 3 (red) on the Ohio Public Health Advisory System (OPHAS) and triggered 2 of the 7 indicators (New cases per capita & New cases increase) and high incidence.

- **What do I need to know about the COVID-19 vaccine? Frequently Asked Questions about the COVID-19 Vaccine.**

Source: CDC & ODH

- ❖ **How will I know that the COVID-19 vaccine is safe?**

- The safety of COVID-19 vaccines is a top priority. The U.S. vaccine safety system ensures that all vaccines are as safe as possible. Every vaccine, no matter what it is for, goes through multiple phases of clinical trials to study the effectiveness of the vaccine in thousands of study participants before it is approved. Data from lab testing and clinical trials are provided to the FDA to determine vaccine safety and effectiveness. The FDA uses rigorous standards during the evaluation and if it determines that a vaccine meets its safety and effectiveness requirements, it can make these available by approval or emergency use authorization. After FDA makes its determination, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) will review available data before making final vaccine recommendations to the CDC. There have been no shortcuts in the vaccine development process. The approval process for COVID-19 vaccines is no different — safety is always the focus.

- ❖ **How many doses are needed?**

- The vaccines that are currently approved for emergency use authorization (Moderna & Pfizer) each require two doses from the same manufacturer. Williams County has received the Moderna vaccine. If you receive a first dose of the Moderna vaccine, your second dose must be the Moderna vaccine, administered 28 days after the first dose. This recommended interval, with a standard four-day grace period, should be followed as closely as possible to receive full protection.

- ❖ **Who gets the COVID-19 vaccine first?**

- Ohio is focusing on those most at risk for severe illness, such as healthcare workers caring for COVID-19 patients, residents and staff at nursing homes & assisted living facilities, people living in congregate care settings with intellectual disabilities, and EMS responders. This is considered Phase 1A. The WCHD is currently receiving 100 doses per week.

- ❖ **I am not in Phase 1A. What should I do to protect myself from COVID-19?**

- Getting us through the pandemic requires using all the tools available. You should cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others, avoid close contact with people who are sick, stay 6 feet away from others, avoid crowds, and wash your hands often.

- ❖ **Will the vaccine be mandatory in Ohio?**

- No.

- ❖ **Do I need to wear a mask and avoid contact with others if I have received 2 doses of the vaccine?**

- Yes. While experts learn more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide under real-life conditions, it will be important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to us to help stop this pandemic, like covering your mouth and nose with a mask, washing hands often, and staying at least 6 feet away from others. Together, COVID-19 vaccination and following CDC's recommendations for how to protect yourself and others will offer the best protection from getting and spreading COVID-19.

- ❖ **Where can I learn more about the vaccine?**

- ODH has great resources about [myths vs. facts](#) about the vaccine and [FAQs](#). You can also learn more on the [CDC's website](#). Click these links for more information.