Every N.J. COVID vaccine site handles appointments differently. Here's how to register in every county. (2/4/21)

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Registered Nurse E. Renee Cantwell, left, and Registered Nurse Therese Zeitz, right, prepare vaccines at the Rowan Medicine COVID-19 Vaccination Center at Rowan University School of Osteopathic Medicine in Stratford on Jan. 27, 2021. Lori M. Nichols | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com

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By Caroline Fassett | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com

There is a multitude of ways that New Jersey residents can make an appointment to receive the coronavirus vaccine, although only a very small percentage of the state's population have received the shot so far.

That's largely because most people in the Garden State are still not eligible for inoculation. Qualified individuals include those in priority groups, specifically healthcare professionals, first responders, people over the age of 65, and those with chronic health conditions.

All New Jersey residents can pre-register for the vaccination through the state's online COVID-19 Vaccine Registration website. The state also offers a vaccine appointment call center, but there have been reports of people being on hold for hours while trying to get through.

New Jersey does not have a centralized vaccine appointment system. Instead, there are more than 200 vaccination sites, 90 phone numbers to potentially call, and 79 different websites eligible people across the state can check while attempting to schedule an appointment.

An appointment is needed at almost ever vaccination site. Instances in which people have been able to get a shot without scheduling ahead are profoundly rare — not least because even if officials are willing to take down the information of people hoping to receive a shot in place of a no-show appointment, they won't necessarily contact them.

"We don't get to just decide if we're eligible," said Leslie Kantor, professor for the Rutgers School of Public Health. "Some people, it's completely clear. Healthcare workers, they're going to get through right away." But for others, even those who recently qualified for a vaccine, included those ages 18 to 64 with certain underlying health conditions — there may be a delay because other groups haven't finished up yet, she noted.

Kantor approved of eligible New Jersey residents attempting to make appointments with multiple different sites — as long as they remain accountable in the event they overbook themselves.

"Because we have a challenging supply situation, and we don't have centralized scheduling, it's of course fine to try to get appointments at different places," Kantor said. "If you happen to get more than one, then you cancel one."

New Jersey is currently in the process of creating more vaccine options for its residents. Gov. Phil Murphy announced on Wednesday that a federal retail pharmacy program with Rite Aid and CVS will launch next week, and that the state is expanding its COVID vaccine distribution program to include some houses of worship and community centers.

Vaccine mega sites

The Rockaway Townsquare in **Morris County**, one of the six coronavirus vaccine mega sites, schedules online appointment with the Atlantic Health System, which also allows individuals to sign up to receive vaccine alerts that are sent to their phone or email address.

At the vaccination megasite at the **Atlantic City** Convention Center, appointments are made online through AtlantiCare; at the Meadowlands Racing and Entertainment Complex vaccination site in **Bergen County**, appointments can be made virtually with Hackensack Meridian Health.

Both the Moorestown Mall in **Burlington County** and the New Jersey Convention and Exposition Center in **Middlesex County** require qualified individuals to first complete a separate online vaccine registration form with Virtua Health and Robert Wood Johnson Barnabas Health, respectively, after which point they will receive an email or text to schedule their appointment.

The Rowan College of South Jersey in **Gloucester County** schedules appointments through registrations made on the statewide website.

County vaccination sites

Beyond vaccine mega sites, eligible New Jerseyans can pursue a myriad of other avenues to make an appointment to receive the vaccine.

The Department of Health in **Burlington County** has partnered with the state and Virtua Health to operate the Burlington County mega site at the Moorestown Mall, announcing on its website that the county will not be receiving vaccine in the upcoming weeks for new first dose clinics. The county previously operated clinics at the Burlington County Emergency Services Training Center in Westampton.

Appointments in Burlington County can also be made by calling or visiting the websites of Boyd's Pharmacy locations, visiting the website of ShopRite pharmacy locations, calling or scheduling electronically with Riverside Medical Group urgent care facility in Willingboro, or making an appointment with the Southern Jersey Family Medical Centers in Buttonwood or Burlington City.

Residents of **Hunterdon County** can sign up online to receive a vaccine at clinics located in Flemington and coordinated by the county's Department of Health, or try to make an appointment with the ShopRite pharmacy in either Flemington or Clinton. Eligible residents can also call Hunterdon Healthcare's Vaccine Call Center to schedule an appointment at one of the network's many clinics.

The greatest number of vaccine opportunities are currently found in **Essex County**, where medical centers including Hackensack Meridian Health are accepting online appointments, and various Newark Community Health Centers appointments over the phone.

Beyond ShopRite pharmacies and small urgent care facilities, there are also healthcare facilities in Essex County that are administering the vaccine, ranging from Vanguard Medical Group — which is only accepting vaccine appointments for its patients through an online scheduling app — and St. Michael's Hospital — where appointments can be made online.

People who live, work or attend school in **Warren County** can make an appointment to receive the vaccine at North Warren High School, the Southwest Branch Library, or the Good Will Fire Company online.

Warren County residents can make appointments through the Hunterdon Healthcare's Vaccine Call Center for Hunterdon Family Medicine at Riverfield in Washington, or through the Atlantic Health System for the Hackettstown Medical Center. St. Luke's in Phillipsburg is requiring all individuals interested in receiving the vaccine to make a MyChart account, through which they can complete the hospital's brief questionnaire and afterwards be notified to schedule their vaccine.

What to do when there are limited vaccine options

In other counties, vaccine opportunities are vastly more limited. Aside from making appointments with ShopRite pharmacies in Rio Grande or Marmora, **Cape May County** residents can get the shot at its county clinics by pre-registering for the vaccine with the state. The Departments of Health for Middlesex and Somerset counties also coordinate appointments at the state rather than county level.

In **Salem County**, individuals have the option to make an online appointment for vaccination clinics orchestrated by the county's Department of Health & Human Services. They can also get the shot with the Southern Jersey Family Medical Center in Salem by making an online appointment.

Some New Jersey residents live in municipalities that have created coronavirus vaccine options for their residents. The Health Department of Vineland in **Cumberland County** is offering vaccine clinics, for which residents can schedule appointments online.

Hoboken in **Hudson County** has partnered with Riverside Medical Group and the Hoboken University Medical Center to provide a coronavirus vaccine to its residents and healthcare workers. Eligible groups need to first fill out an online form, after which point they will be contacted by a staff member to officially schedule an appointment.

How to register to receive the vaccine

Individuals can register to receive a coronavirus vaccine with the state Department of Health online here, or call to make an appointment using a toll-free phone line.

The full list of vaccination opportunities in the state, broken down by county, can be found here.

To learn more about vaccinations and their distribution in your county, click on your county below:

- Atlantic County
- Bergen County
- Burlington County
- Camden County
- Cape May County
- Cumberland County
- Essex County
- Gloucester County
- Hudson County
- Hunterdon County
- Mercer County
- Middlesex County
- Monmouth County
- Morris County
- Ocean County
- Passaic County
- Salem County
- Somerset County
- Sussex County
- Union County
- Warren County

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