



## **Columbia County Board of Supervisors**

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**Matt B. Murell**  
Chairman

**Kelly S. Baccaro**  
Clerk

Tuesday, January 12, 2021

### **CHAIRMAN'S PRESS RELEASE**

#### **CHAIRMAN BLASTS STATE'S ABSURD VAX DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM**

"This situation has gone beyond crazy," said Columbia County Board of Supervisors Chairman Matt Murell on Tuesday.

"Governor Cuomo's vaccination distribution quote-plan-unquote has done nothing but sow confusion in the state and Columbia County," Chairman Murell continued. "Every day seems to bring another random announcement that does nothing to further the cause of getting the vaccine in the arms of our residents."

The governor's announcement last Friday that vaccine distribution was being expanded to include the 1B and now 1C categories caused an avalanche of telephone calls into the county Department of Health, Chairman Murell said. That barrage of calls continues as county residents seek to determine their eligibility, and, if possible, to sign up for their vaccine.

"As soon as someone hung up the phone, another call comes in, which has only been exacerbated by the state's hotline being overwhelmed," said Chairman Murell. "The system, such as it is, is broken. There are now millions of more people eligible – under the state plan -- for the vaccine than there are available vaccines. It's beyond unreasonable to expect the county Department of Health to conduct vaccination PODS, test for the coronavirus, answer a barrage of telephone calls, contact trace, and conduct normal business under these conditions, among other daily tasks. This has all been caused by the State's haphazard approach to managing the vaccine distribution program."

On Monday, Columbia County Department of Health Director Jack Mabb said that his department was allotted 300 doses of the vaccine this week. "That allows us to reach only a tiny portion of those eligible," he noted.

"It makes no sense at all," said Chairman Murell. "I may be painting with a broad brush here, but basic math tells me if we continue to receive but 300 doses per week, in a county of 62,000 residents, it will take months for individuals to get their first doses.

Further, he said, "At a time when county personnel are already hamstrung by COVID-19 infections, mandatory quarantines, and other COVID-related issues, county workers are being diverted into assisting the Department of Health. That's one thing, but to attempt to keep up with the governor's whims and conduct county business at the same time is a near-superhuman chore."

#### **CORONAVIRUS TESTING SITES (as of 1-8-2021)**

New York Testing Site, University at Albany. By appointment only at 888-364-3065 or [www.covid19screening.health.ny.gov](http://www.covid19screening.health.ny.gov); WellNow Urgent Care, 446 Fairview Avenue, Hudson. 518-267-3496.

May be out-of-pocket costs; Columbia County Department of Health, 518-828-3358. Check [www.columbiacountynyhealth.com](http://www.columbiacountynyhealth.com) for scheduled walk-up and drive-thru clinics; Greene County Department of Health, by appointment only on Wednesdays from 5-6:30 p.m., 518-719-3600..

Also, Community Care Physicians, Latham. 518-863-3600. 12-7 p.m.; Priority 1 Urgent Care, Guilderland, 518-867-8040; Whitney Young, Albany, 518-465-4771; Rite Aid, Colonie, 518-267-3496; CareMount Medical Urgent Care, Rhinebeck, 844-484-6564; CVS-Valatie, 518-758-2200; CVS-Red Hook, 845-758-9612.

Also, Central Med Urgent Care, 1662 Central Avenue, Albany, 518-240-1456, bills insurance; Walgreens Rapid Testing, 41 Holland Avenue, Albany, 518-426, 2976.

EmUrgentCare locations offer COVID-19 tests for patients without symptoms at the following locations: 98 Wolf Rd., Albany; 11835 US-9W, West Coxsackie; 2976 US-9W, Saugerties; 5 New Karner Rd., Guilderland. The telephone number for all locations is 518-264-9000. Check for out-of-pocket costs.

Price Chopper test locations with testing hours from 7-9 a.m. on Tuesdays: Chatham, Clifton Park, Latham, Troy, Wilton. Other Price Chopper locations and times: Ft. Edward, Tuesday, 7-10 a.m.; Glenmont, Wednesday, 7-10 a.m.; Johnstown, Tuesday, 7-11 a.m.; and Schenectady, Wednesday, 12-2 p.m.

Pine Plains Pharmacy: 2965 Church Street, Pine Plains, 518-398-5588. Monday-Saturday by appointment only.

### ***AT-HOME COVID-19 TEST AVAILABLE***

LabCorp currently offers an at-home COVID-19 test at <https://www.pixel.labcorp.com/at-home-test-kits/covid-19-test-home-collection-kit>

This test does not detect antibodies or immunity. It is designed to determine active infection with the virus that causes COVID-19.

After completing a short eligibility survey, choose a billing option, which can be through personal insurance, the use of federal funds to cover the cost of this test on your behalf if you're uninsured, or with a credit card. The test kit will arrive via FedEx. After collecting and returning your sample, the average time to deliver results is one-two days from when your sample is received at the lab, according to LabCorp.

### **COUNTY DOH FLU SHOTS AVAILABLE**

The flu vaccine will be offered by appointment only at the regularly scheduled immunization clinic every Tuesday from 1-3:30 p.m. at Columbia County Department of Health at 325 Columbia Street, Hudson. An evening immunization clinic is also available on the third Tuesday of each month from 4-6 p.m. All clinics are by appointment only.

The flu vaccine is the best protection we have from the flu and its complication, and has become even more critical in the time of COVID-19. Talk to your doctor before getting the flu shot if you have ever had a serious allergic reaction to eggs or a previous flu shot, or have a history of Guillain-Barre Syndrome.

The DOH accepts the following insurance plans: Blue Shield of North East New York, CDPHP, Fidelis, Medicare Part B, MVP, Medicaid, and United Health Care. Other senior plans may be billed, including some Blue Cross Blue Shield plans. If you are uninsured or underinsured, you may be eligible for a lower fee or no fee for the flu vaccine. All others are expected to pay a fee of \$42 for the flu vaccine, with the exact cash amount or checks accepted. Debit or credit cards are not accepted.

### ***DONATION INFORMATION***

**Masks:** Those wishing to donate cloth masks to the county stockpile may contact the county Emergency Management office at 518-828-1212 or [cceoc@columbiacountysheriff.us](mailto:cceoc@columbiacountysheriff.us). Or Supervisor Rob Lagonia at [rlagonia@austerlitzny.com](mailto:rlagonia@austerlitzny.com)

**Monetary:** Monetary donations intended for the purchase of coronavirus testing kits and much-needed equipment for emergency responders, medical personnel, and others on the front lines of the coronavirus fight are advised to send a check in care of Columbia County, with coronavirus noted in the memo field. The check can be sent to the Columbia County Controller's Office, 401 State Street, Hudson, NY 12534. All money received is being placed in a dedicated account.

**PPE:** Those wishing to make donations of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as N95 masks, face shields, and gowns, are advised to contact the Emergency Management Office at 518-828-1212. If no one answers, leave a message and someone will return the call.

**Food:** Donations should be directed to the county Office for the Aging (518-828-4258) and local food pantries.

#### *DISCLAIMER*

It is the county's intention to issue accurate information regarding the coronavirus situation under conditions that can change by the minute. For the most up-to-date, accurate information, visit the County Department of Health's website at <https://www.columbiacountynyhealth.com/home/coronavirus-covid-19> or their Facebook page @: <https://www.facebook.com/Columbia-County-Department-of-Health-469399129790791/>. The state's coronavirus website, with up-to-the-minute information, can be located at <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/home>.

Every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, the county will issue a press release on the coronavirus situation. The releases can be found on the Columbia County website and the Facebook pages of the Board of Supervisors, Sheriff's Office, the Department of Health, and the Emergency Management Office.