

Vaccines

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A third vaccine, being developed by Johnson & Johnson, requires just one inoculation, though initial reports show its effectiveness is somewhat less than the Pfizer and Moderna doses. A panel of health experts endorsed the Johnson & Johnson vaccine Friday.

Logistical bottlenecks are being cleared and Biden is bringing in more help for states.

In Oregon, Phase 1 vaccine eligibility, which covers about 1.36 million people, reaches its last eligibility milestone Monday, when those age 65-69 can make appointments.

The state then plans to use most of March to catch up with some of the Phase 1 backlog.

Phase 2 eligibility begins March 29, when residents 45-64 with medical conditions that the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines as making them more likely to become seriously ill or die if infected with COVID-19, can sign-up. Conditions include Type 2 diabetes, cancer, heart conditions, kidney disease, COPD, Down syndrome, compromised immune systems and sickle cell disease. Pregnancy is on the list, as is obesity that results in a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30 or more.

Residents should consult with their doctors and with the full explanation of qualifying conditions on the CDC and Oregon Health Authority



Kerry Gillette, a physician assistant with Mosaic Medical, fills syringes with the Moderna vaccine during a COVID-19 vaccination clinic at Bethlehem Inn in Bend.

Ryan Brennecke/
The Bulletin

websites.

Also eligible on March 29 are some farm and food industry workers, homeless people, residents of low-income or congregate housing, wildland firefighters and those displaced by the 2020 wildfires.

On May 1, those 16-44 with medical conditions on the CDC list can sign up. Also front-line workers with jobs dealing with the public, and any adult living in a multigenerational household.

Phase 2 wraps up with anyone over 45 eligible on June 1 and anyone over 16 on July 1. No vaccine approved for children is available yet, though several are under development.

The optimistic scenario for the future clashed with the reality of widespread frustration over the gap between eligibility and availability. Brown and Allen forecast “chaos” last month for the system of large vaccination centers and local pharmacies that will handle inoculation of seniors across the state.

The central math problem is too little vaccine for too many

arms.

Allen pointed out Oregon is at or above the national average of 15% of the populace having received at least one shot.

But a look at the numbers is daunting and at least for now, disappointing.

About 1.36 million people in Oregon are in Phase 1. Each vaccination requires two shots, or 2.72 million shots for the group.

Oregon is not close to reaching that number. Between the vaccine first becoming available at the end of December and Friday, Oregon reports it has injected 911,648 doses.

That would leave 1.8 million shots needed to cover Phase 1 with a month to go until Phase 2 starts.

Oregon has ramped up to about 20,000 shots per day and forecasts expanding the number of places and people who can inoculate those eligible as the vaccine supply increases.

One number that's not known is how many people are refusing the offer to be inoculated.

Oregon Health Authority

Phase 2 eligibility priorities

March 29

- Adults age 45 to 64 with underlying health conditions, as defined by the CDC
- Seasonal workers, such as migrant farm workers, seafood and agricultural workers, and food processing workers.
- Currently displaced victims of the September 2020 wildfires
- Wildland firefighters
- People living in low-income and congregate senior housing
- Homeless

May 1:

- Individuals age 16-45 with underlying health conditions
- All other frontline workers as defined by the CDC
- Multigenerational household members

June 1:

Adults 45 to 64.

July 1:

Everyone age 16 and over.

Director Pat Allen said neither state or federal officials are tracking who is eligible but says no to the vaccine. The higher that number, the more vaccine is actually available for those that want it.

Allen said OHA is still vaccinating Phase 1 groups who want to be inoculated but have not yet been able to get to a vaccine site.

Deschutes County receives more doses

Deschutes County will receive 2,340 COVID-19 first-dose vaccinations for residents who are 65 and older.

To date the county has vaccinated 15,000 of the estimated 40,000 residents who are 65 and older with a first dose, according to Deschutes County Health Services. That means about 25,000 will be trying to sign up on the limited slots. The county had created a system online that was supposed to open on Saturday, but instead will issue guidance for residents on Monday, said Morgan Emerson, Deschutes County Health Services spokeswoman.

If weekly allocations do not increase, the county estimates it may take until early May to vaccinate all residents 65 and older, according to a prepared statement.

“Unfortunately, due to limited vaccine supply, not everyone who is eligible to receive a vaccine will be able to schedule an appointment this week,” Dr. George Conway, Deschutes County Health Services director, said in a prepared statement. “With current allocations, it may be several weeks before everyone who is eligible is able to be scheduled.”

Brown said that pausing this month will allow Oregon to catch up on the backlog. “We want to keep our commitment to our seniors,” Brown said.

Allen said Phase 2 will begin May 29 regardless of how many Phase 1 people get inoculated this month.

Brown has been sharply criticized for her decision last month to depart from CDC guidelines recommending the next priority go to vaccinating those over 65. In Oregon, 90% of COVID-19 deaths have been age 60 or older.

The governor opted to put 153,000 teachers, school staff and day care workers ahead of seniors.

Brown argued the school group was small compared to the nearly 800,000 seniors. To wait would likely wipe out any chance to get schoolchildren

back in classrooms in the spring.

Learning in the classroom is overall far better and equitable than “virtual” learning where a laptop or tablet and internet connection can be difficult to obtain for poorer families. Schools also offer hot meals, and check in on children's mental and physical health, while freeing parents to work outside the home.

Critics said even a short delay that led to an avoidable death was wrong, with unofficial estimates putting the possible deaths from the two-week delay at up to 100.

OHA said it would issue updated guidance on the availability of vaccine and the various ways to sign-up and receive a notification when a resident's eligibility group comes up.

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Parking

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A property owner would need to have a memorandum of understanding with a nonprofit organization that could offer case management services, which help connect homeless people to housing resources, get them signed up for the Oregon Health Plan or other services that help people get back on their feet.

Something similar to the second program is already happening in Bend. Under the city's COVID-19 emergency declaration, property owners can apply for a permit that allows for temporary camping on private property. But once

the emergency declaration expires, the program would expire with it.

At least two organizations have taken advantage of the program under the emergency order, said Carolyn Eagan, the city's economic development director.

Dawn Holland, of the nonprofit DAWNS House that offers transitional housing for women suffering from addiction, was the first to take part in the program under the emergency order. Holland was able to purchase four RVs to be used by homeless families and put them on a lot next to her nonprofit.

She is proud of what they have accomplished since November, though

getting enough funding to pay for the services it takes to maintain a program like this remains a challenge and requires constant fundraising efforts. Even so, Holland said if given the opportunity to make it permanent she would.

Holland said that no one who has entered her program has returned to the streets.

“We're halting the recidivism of homelessness with the clients we are helping on a small scale,” she said.

Those interested in donating to support the DAWNS House program can go to dawnshouse.org.

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Alan Sawyers, who helps with maintenance at DAWNS House, rolls up hoses after working on a RV unit at the transitional housing site in Bend.

Ryan Brennecke/
The Bulletin

Water

Continued from A1

Recent canal infrastructure improvements across the region have helped irrigation districts transfer water back to the rivers, which helps improve fish habitat.

Much of the piping is being done by the Central Oregon Irrigation District, a senior water rights holder. The North Unit Irrigation District, a junior water rights holder, benefits by having water transferred into its system.

“COID is proud that this conservation project benefits our patrons and generates a more reliable water supply for North Unit Irrigation District farmers in an environmentally and economically sustainable manner,” Craig Horrell, COID's manager, said in a prepared statement. “This project is a win for farmers, the

Crooked River and fish.”

The transfer of water into the Crooked River will help restore habitat and water quality for fish that inhabit these waters, including reintroduced salmon and steelhead, said Kate Fitzpatrick executive director of Deschutes River Conservancy. Fitzpatrick added that the project was a unique collaboration between districts.

“This project showcases innovative coordination between two irrigation districts and the DRC to solve longstanding water issues — the kind of out-of-the-box thinking that we'll need to amplify moving forward,” said Fitzpatrick.

The project saves 1,602 acre-feet of water, the conservancy stated. The saved water has been transferred to 642 acres in the North Unit Irrigation District, a junior water rights holder located around Madras. An equivalent amount

of water was then transferred to the Crooked River, which will increase flows by 16% during the irrigation season. The increased flows start just upstream of Smith Rock State Park.

“This project supports junior water users at a time when water scarcity has destabilized many family farms,” Mike Britton, North Unit's director, said in a prepared statement. “The reduction in pumping costs will also be a significant benefit for Madras area farms.”

Work on the canal piping project was completed six years ago, but April marks the first month that the water will be protected instream in the lower Crooked River. That's because the Oregon Water Resources Department finalized the water rights transfer earlier this month.

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U.S. report implicates Saudi crown prince in killing of Jamal Khashoggi

BY KAREN DEYOUNG

The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — The Biden administration will impose no direct punishment on Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for the 2018 murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi, despite the conclusion of a long-awaited intelligence report released Friday that he “approved” the operation, administration officials said.

“The relationship with Saudi Arabia is bigger than any one individual,” Secretary of State Antony Blinken said at a news conference.

By making public the intelligence report — withheld by the Trump administration for two years — and taking other actions, President Joe Biden has moved toward a promised “recalibration” of the U.S.-Saudi relationship, he said.

But for many lawmakers,

human rights activists and Saudi dissidents, it was not enough.

The crown prince “should suffer sanctions, including financial, travel and legal — and the Saudi government should suffer grave consequences as long as he remains in government,” said Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., whose legislation in early 2019 mandated release of the report by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

Wyden was joined in those sentiments by a number of Democrats, although others spoke vaguely only of further “accountability.” Few Republican lawmakers ventured a public opinion.

The Open Society Justice Initiative, which has been in court since early last year to force release of intelligence on the Khashoggi murder, said “the U.S. and other govern-

ments must take immediate measures to hold the Crown Prince and the Saudi government accountable for their flagrant disregard for the rule of law.”

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