

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**January 13, 2021**

**Media Contact:**

Brookie Crawford, public information officer, Central Region, [brookie.crawford@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:brookie.crawford@vdh.virginia.gov)

## **Richmond Area Health Districts to Begin Phase 1b Vaccinating**

(RICHMOND, Va.) -- The local health districts of the Richmond Metropolitan Area (Chesterfield, Chickahominy, Henrico, and Richmond) will begin expanding their COVID-19 vaccination campaigns to include some Phase 1b frontline essential workers on Monday, January 18. Specifically, workers in the first three categories of [Phase 1b](#), will now be eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccines. Vaccines will be administered through a combination of regional mass vaccination events, as well as partnerships with various providers. Vaccination of [Phase 1a populations](#) will continue as the region opens up to Phase 1b.

“We know that the burden of this disease and the underlying social vulnerabilities that put these essential workers at risk do not end at the boundaries of our city and counties,” said Dr. Melissa Viray, Acting Director for Richmond and Henrico Health Districts. “It makes the most sense to coordinate our vaccination efforts and make sure all of our communities have access to the best tool we have to end the pandemic.”

The first three categories of Phase 1b frontline essential workers include:

- 1) Police, Fire, and Hazmat
- 2) Corrections and homeless shelter workers
- 3) Childcare/PreK-12 Teachers/Staff

Individuals in these categories will start to have the opportunity to receive their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine at one of three large-scale regional vaccination clinics beginning next week.

“Many school teachers and staff in our jurisdictions have courageously shown up for in-person instruction throughout this pandemic in order to serve their students’ needs and to provide the best education possible. This vaccine offers a shield of protection and a beacon of hope for this group of essential workers,” says Dr. Tom Franck, Director of Chickahominy Health District.

Next week’s COVID-19 vaccination events are taking place in addition to each local health districts’ ongoing COVID-19 vaccination efforts for qualified individuals. Metro area districts are exploring ways to move deeper into the 1b vaccine eligible group as additional resources become available to distribute vaccine more broadly.

“VDH is continuing to work with pharmacies, hospital systems, and medical practices to establish the infrastructure to more quickly and effectively distribute available resources and vaccinate others who are part of 1b and beyond,” says Dr. Alex Samuel, Director of Chesterfield Health District.

This step is only the beginning of the Phase 1b vaccination process; other populations that qualify for vaccines in Phase 1b will be offered COVID-19 vaccines in the coming weeks. Health districts will continue to prioritize future phases of vaccination using VDH guidelines, with an emphasis on those who cannot perform their work remotely and have increased exposure risk interfacing with the public or in close proximity to coworkers.

If you live or work in Richmond City or Henrico County and think you may qualify for a COVID-19 vaccine in [Phase 1a](#) or [Phase 1b](#), please visit [vax.rchd.com](http://vax.rchd.com) to fill out a COVID-19 interest form. Call 804-205-3501 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.) if you need assistance.

For all other local health districts, please take this simple online [eligibility tool](#) or call the VDH COVID Hotline: 1-877-ASK-VDH3. Local health districts' emails and hotlines are below, but due to the high volume of calls and messages, their ability to reply quickly will vary.

- Chesterfield: [Chesterfield\\_Covid@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Chesterfield_Covid@vdh.virginia.gov), 804-318-8207.
- Chickahominy (Charles City, Goochland, Hanover, New Kent): [chdvaccine@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:chdvaccine@vdh.virginia.gov)
- Richmond City or Henrico County: [RHHDvax@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:RHHDvax@vdh.virginia.gov), 804-205-3501

###

**Media contacts:**

Richmond and Henrico Health District: Cat Long, 804-363-0933, [RHHDpr@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:RHHDpr@vdh.virginia.gov)  
Chickahominy Health District: Caitlin Hodge, 804-382-6592, [Caitlin.Hodge@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Caitlin.Hodge@vdh.virginia.gov)  
Chesterfield Health District: Ginell Ampey, 804-751-4358, [Ginell.Ampey@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:Ginell.Ampey@vdh.virginia.gov)

*(More)*