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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

**PEOPLE AGE FIFTY AND OLDER ARE NOW ELIGIBLE TO
RECEIVE THE COVID VACCINE IN SAN FRANCISCO**

Expansion in eligibility comes as nearly 50% of the adult population of San Francisco has received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine

San Francisco, CA — Mayor London N. Breed and the Department of Public Health (DPH), announced today that in accordance with state and federal guidance, all people age 50 and over are now eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. This significant expansion in vaccine eligibility comes as the City approaches an important milestone in its unprecedented vaccination effort: nearly half of people in San Francisco age 16 and over have now received at least one dose of the vaccine. The vaccine is not yet approved by the FDA for children under 16.

In addition to providing the vaccine to nearly half of the adult population, San Francisco has made significant progress in providing the vaccine to its older population. 82% percent of San Franciscans 65 and older have received at least one dose of the vaccine and 62% have been fully vaccinated. These high vaccination rates in the 65 and older population is especially important because older individuals are most at risk of hospitalization and death from COVID-19.

“This is another big step in our fight against COVID-19. San Francisco has followed the science throughout this pandemic, whether that meant taking early action last year as the virus began circulating, or taking precautions like wearing a mask. Now San Franciscans are stepping up and getting vaccinated because we know that it’s our best shot to end this pandemic once and for all,” said Mayor Breed. “That’s why San Francisco is well ahead of the national average for how many of our residents have been vaccinated, and this weekend we will reach another important milestone with 50% of our residents having received a vaccine. There’s an end to this pandemic in sight, and we’re doing everything we can to make that happen as soon as possible.”

Despite this significant progress, insufficient vaccine supply remains the single biggest factor limiting the City’s vaccination effort. Those newly eligible people age 50 and over should visit sf.gov/getvaccinated to learn about options for receiving the vaccine and to find links to book appointments at different vaccination sites. Because supply remains extremely limited while eligibility is expanding, it may take a number of weeks to find an available appointment. Eligible individuals should continue to be patient, should keep checking the website, and should accept the first vaccine that is offered. If San Francisco receives sufficient supply to meet the City’s distribution capacity, over 80% of adults could be vaccinated with first doses by mid-May.

On March 15th, in accordance with State guidelines, the City expanded eligibility to people with disabilities and severe underlying conditions, people living in congregate settings like jails and



shelters, and people experiencing homelessness. Also eligible are people 65 and older, people who work in the healthcare, food and agriculture, education and childcare, and emergency services sectors. The state government has announced that on April 15, all Californians over the age of 16 will be eligible to receive the vaccine.

“Expanding eligibility to people age 50 and over is an important step in our larger goal of fully vaccinating San Francisco. But even as eligibility grows broader, we must remain focused on providing the vaccine to the individuals and communities most at risk and hardest to reach,” said Dr. Grant Colfax, Director of Public Health. “Through a comprehensive and equitable vaccination effort, we can protect our City and end this pandemic. This urgency is reinforced by rapidly climbing case rates in other parts of the country as well as increasing cases locally.”

The goal of the City’s vaccination strategy is to make receiving the vaccine as convenient and comfortable for as many people as possible, particularly in neighborhoods disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The City has developed a robust distribution infrastructure that includes high-volume vaccination sites, neighborhood sites, community clinics, pharmacy partnerships, and mobile vaccination teams.

Recently the City’s vaccination infrastructure has expanded to include new sites and new methods for distributing the vaccine. In partnership with communities that have been most impacted by COVID-19, the City is on track to open two additional neighborhood vaccine sites in the next two weeks. In addition to new sites, mobile vaccination teams have scaled up across the City to bring the vaccine directly to communities that cannot easily access high volume vaccination sites. This includes a visit by the mobile vaccination team on Saturday, March 27 to Treasure Island, which will see regular appearances from mobile teams in the coming weeks. Mobile vaccination teams are also active in senior housing sites, shelter in place hotels, and senior centers around the City.

San Francisco’s commitment to an equitable vaccination strategy, has focused on reaching communities that have been hard-hit by the pandemic, including the Latino community and neighborhoods in the Southeast of the city. A higher proportion of the DPH-administered vaccinations have gone to people of color than the total citywide vaccinations. For example, the Latino population represents 14% of the City’s overall population and has received more than 26% of DPH’s vaccinations, compared with 12% citywide. [The vaccine dashboard](#) also shows that the top three neighborhoods receiving the largest amount of DPH-controlled vaccines are the Bayview, Mission and Excelsior.

In order to assist individuals with accessing appointments, the City has set up a call center to help people, especially those who are 65 and older, those with disabilities and those who are unable to easily access the internet or schedule an appointment through their provider. Individuals may call to learn about vaccine options and receive assistance in booking an appointment to some locations. The number is (628) 652-2700.

Muni and Paratransit are free for anyone traveling to and from COVID-19 vaccine appointments. The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency is also providing additional access to taxi



service for those using the Essential Trip Card. Information can be found at sfmta.com/COVID and sfmta.com/paratransit.

The distribution of a national vaccine during a pandemic is an unprecedented event, and DPH is partnering with healthcare providers to have as many people vaccinated as fast as possible, while following the federal and state guidelines for prioritization. In the meantime, it is critical that all San Franciscans continue to follow all public health recommendations to wear a mask when not in your home, cough into your elbow, wash your hands, keep six feet from others whenever you must be in public places, and help your local health department collect information to inform people of possible infection. These steps will help protect you and those around you while COVID-19 is circulating, and, along with the vaccine, will be essential to ending the pandemic.

Anyone who works or lives in San Francisco can sign up for a notification when they are eligible for vaccination at [SF.gov/vaccinenotify](https://sf.gov/vaccinenotify). The City will continue to provide regular updates to the public about the vaccine in San Francisco at [SF.gov/covidvaccine](https://sf.gov/covidvaccine).

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