



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Rollout of COVID-19 vaccination campaign to begin on Wednesday**

The distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine in The Bahamas will begin on Wednesday 17 March 2021 on the islands of New Providence and Grand Bahama, the National COVID-19 Vaccine Consultative Committee announced today.

Individuals eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine in this first phase include:

- healthcare workers in the public sector, and private sector healthcare workers participating in the vaccination rollout;
- residents and staff of eldercare homes and non-ambulatory residents registered in the public health system; and
- staff of the uniformed branches (Royal Bahamas Defence Force, the Royal Bahamas Police Force, Bahamas Department of Corrections, Bahamas Customs and the Department of Immigration).

Appointments are not required for residents and staff of eldercare homes and non-ambulatory residents, who will be vaccinated by COVID-19 Vaccine Mobile Units.

The appointment system will go live on Tuesday morning, 16 March, for healthcare workers and uniformed staff members beginning with the Royal Bahamas Defence Force, on New Providence and Grand Bahama.

Eligible healthcare workers and uniformed branch staff will be informed within their respective institutions as to how to make their appointments.

All eligible vaccine candidates in this first phase will be required to present an ID code generated by the appointment system and valid government-issued identification at the vaccination site.

Starting Wednesday, vaccinations will be administered at public health institutions, including the Princess Margaret Hospital and the Rand Memorial Hospital, and Doctors Hospital, and the vaccination site at Loyola Hall on New Providence for Community Health providers.

Those required for the continuity of Government, including Government officials, will be vaccinated during this initial effort.

A pilot of the vaccination process was conducted on Sunday at Loyola Hall, Gladstone Road to ensure a smooth rollout.

A group of 110 individuals took part in Sunday's pilot. The group consisted of healthcare workers, staff of the uniformed branches and volunteers working on the vaccination campaign, including data entry clerks, vaccinators, medical observers and other volunteers.

Prime Minister the Most Hon. Dr. Hubert Minnis and Mrs. Patricia Minnis, and Minister of Health Hon. Renward Wells also received the vaccine on Sunday.

As the COVID-19 vaccination program progresses, members of the public will be notified in advance of eligibility to make their appointments to receive the vaccine.

More information will be provided as it relates to the rollout in the Family Islands in short order.

The Bahamas is expected to receive an additional 33,600 COVID-19 vaccine doses before the end of March through the COVAX Facility. A further tranche of approximately 66,000 vaccines is expected to arrive by the end of May.

The Government continues to work on all fronts to secure additional safe vaccines from approved providers.

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Office of the Prime Minister  
Commonwealth of The Bahamas  
Contact: [opmcommunications@bahamas.gov.bs](mailto:opmcommunications@bahamas.gov.bs)  
Website: [www.opm.gov.bs](http://www.opm.gov.bs)