December 21, 2020

To: Monterey County EMS Providers

From: Monterey County EMS Agency

Subject: COVID Vaccination for EMS Personnel

Due to limited amounts of COVID-19 vaccine being available for the initial distribution, the California Department of Public Health (DCPH) has developed Recommendations for allocation of COVID-19 vaccine. Monterey County Public Health is following these guidelines.

This means CDPH has identified phases for the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine to Californians. Phase 1a distribution (top priority) is to “Persons at risk of exposure to SARS-CIV-2 through their work in any role in direct health care or long-term care settings”. It also includes “Residents of skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, and similar long-term setting for older or medically vulnerable individuals.”

To manage distribution of the vaccine, CDPH has created a subprioritization by role or type of facility if there are limited amounts of vaccine available. CDPH has created three Tiers within Phase 1a. Each Tier then has a ranked order for the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine.

In Tier 1 the first ranked group is acute care, psychiatric, and correctional facility hospitals. This is followed by skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities and other places with older or medically vulnerable individuals.

The third ranked group in Tier 1 is paramedics, EMTs, and others providing emergency medical services.

As you have seen in the news, local hospital personnel are currently being vaccinated. The residents and staff at long-term care facilities will be next.

The process for vaccinating EMS personnel has begun. A survey has been completed to determine the amount of vaccine that will be needed to vaccinate EMS personnel. Health Department personnel will be working directly with EMS service provider organizations to begin vaccinating their staff as soon as the vaccine is available.

Despite rumors to the contrary, EMS personnel are highly prioritized in the Allocation Guidelines for healthcare workers. Please direct questions to your EMS employer or the Monterey County EMS Agency for accurate information.