

## COVID-19 Report to Members ~ December 21, 2020

Reports are sent on Mondays and Thursdays, unless there's breaking news.

Unless there is breaking news, IHA will resume regular publication of the COVID Update on January 4.

## Resources & Equipment

### Moderna vaccine coming to Idaho

Within about 72 hours, Moderna's vaccine was given the thumbs up by both the FDA and the CDC, paving the way for a second vaccine to be available in the US before the end of the year.

On Friday, the FDA granted an EUA for the vaccine, a day after the Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) issued its support. The CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) met over the weekend and issued its recommendation for the vaccine for people 18 and over. The advisory committee also voted to include those 75 and older and specific front-line essential workers and teachers in the next phase of coronavirus vaccinations..

The first Moderna shipment should arrive in Idaho today with all 28,000 doses in the state by Thursday. The distribution plan to public health districts is expected to be:

- District 1 4200
- District 2 2100
- District 3 4100
- District 4 9100
- District 5 2700
- District 6 2800
- District 7 3000

The Moderna vaccine, like its Pfizer counterpart, is given in two doses and is based on messenger RNA. However, the Moderna series is four weeks apart and does not require extreme cold storage. Storage for this vaccine is between -25 to -15 degrees Celsius.

Several resources for this vaccine were released over the weekend:

- [CDC vaccine info](#)
- [CDC storage and handling summary](#)
- [FDA factsheet for healthcare providers administering the vaccine](#)
- [FDA factsheet for recipients of the vaccine and their caregivers](#)

In other vaccine news, this week's shipment of the Pfizer vaccine was reduced to 9,750 doses. Approximately 7,800 doses will be used in the Pharmacy Partnership Program to begin administering the vaccine to long-term healthcare workers and residents. Walgreens and CVS should begin those efforts on December 28. The rest of this shipment will be sent to Public Health Districts 4 and 7.

### Vaccine resources for providers

As vaccines continue to be distributed across Idaho, the Department of Health and Welfare has developed resources for healthcare providers and others to utilize in working with their communities. The [communication toolkit](#) includes information on how vaccines work, finding credible information, resources and monitoring vaccine safety, and social media visuals.

The new [vaccine page](#) of Idaho's [coronavirus website](#) contains additional information on the actions of the state COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Committee and the process for prioritizing groups to receive the vaccine.

## Reimbursement & Policy

### Congress moves forward with additional stimulus

After countless starts and stops, leaders of the US House and Senate struck a deal on legislative language late Sunday for an appropriations bill that includes a \$900 billion COVID-19 stimulus package. At the time this was written, the bill had made it out of committee and was being debated in the House of Representatives. They are expected to take action today and the Senate Majority Leader has announced the Senate will also vote on the bill, even if they have to stay late into the evening.

Most coverage on the relief package has been regarding stimulus checks, enhanced unemployment benefits and aid for struggling businesses. However, there are multiple provisions directed at healthcare. The [text](#) was released a short time ago. While it is likely that nobody has had time to read the 5,593 pages, numerous reports indicate the following provisions are included:

- \$3 billion in Provider Relief Funding as well as reverting the reporting guidelines back to allow providers to use any reasonable method to calculate lost revenue and allowing health systems to move targeted funds within their system;
- \$20 billion for the purchase of vaccines so they can be available at no charge to the public;
- \$8 billion for vaccine distribution;
- \$20 billion to assist with testing;
- \$10 billion to help with child-care assistance; and
- \$7 billion to bolster broadband access to help Americans connect remotely.

The bill does not include funding to help states and local governments. However, it does include language to delay the deadline to use existing state CARES Act funds for one year. With the Governor's approval, this will relieve some of the pressure Idaho has been facing to expend the \$5 million allocated for hospital traveler staffing before December 31st. The ability to carry these funds forward into the next calendar year allows more economically fragile hospitals to stay in the market for contract labor. Without accessing some of the funds during the first quarter of 2021, many hospitals will not be able to afford the balance of contracts in 2021 at the current market rates.

We anticipate further analysis of the legislation in the coming days, in the meantime more details are available in this [AHA Special Bulletin](#).

## Virtual Meetings & Education

### State Vaccine Distribution and Administration

AHA will host this call featuring state hospital association leaders who will share highlights from their state-specific plans and experiences with vaccine distribution and administration.

Tuesday, December 22 ~ 1p MTN / 12p PAC  
877-271-1828, passcode 19694799

### IDHW vaccination webinars

IDHW's Immunization Program is hosting a series of webinars to provide training on COVID-19 vaccines. Training topics will include: vaccine reporting requirements, storage and handling, recommendations, safety, and 2nd dose reminders. This week's webinars include:

#### PrepMod<sup>SM</sup> Basics

Tuesday, December 22 ~ 10a MTN / 9a PAC

#### **Vaccine Recommendations, Storage, Handling & Administration**

multiple options of this presentation are being offered

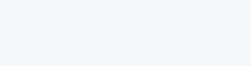
**Tuesday, December 22** ~ 1:30p MTN / 12:30p PAC

**Tuesday, December 22** ~ 5:30p MTN / 4:30p PAC

**Wednesday, December 23** ~ 8a MTN / 7a PAC

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