

Press Release

Hamilton County Health Department



Web: health.hamiltontn.org

****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

January 1, 2021

Health Department Administers 1,158 Doses of Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine Thursday; Asks for Community's Patience in this Historic Undertaking

HAMILTON COUNTY, TN – Hamilton County Health Department officials began administering the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to those who qualify Thursday morning at their drive-thru vaccination POD at the TN Riverpark. This was the first day that ages 75 and above and other categories were added to the [Tennessee Department of Health's Vaccination Plan](#). Due to the unprecedented interest in the vaccine, roads and highways to the vaccination site backed up for miles and traffic safety was a concern.

At 1PM, officials made the decision to close the gate at the entrance. People outside of the gate had been sitting in their vehicles for hours, and officials didn't want them to continue sitting in their cars and not get the vaccine because supply was limited.

At that point, officials projected there were enough doses for the hundreds of people who were waiting in line inside the park. Those people continued through the park route to the vaccination tent and the last in line left around 4:30.

"Late in the afternoon, we realized we had more vaccine on hand than anticipated," says Health Department Administrator Becky Barnes. "Nurses were able to draw 6 and occasionally 7 doses from some vials instead of the projected 5. This was our first day using the Pfizer vaccine and staff had no history to project the actual doses we would have. The vaccine doses had been thawed and prepared and had to be given to people as soon as possible. The Health Department's intent is to never waste a single dose.

Since the thawed vaccine needed to be used as soon as possible, staff on-site were asked to call people they knew could get there as soon as possible. By 7PM, the Health Department had administered 1,158 doses. Not a single dose was wasted.

"The dose estimate was a miscalculation on our part and we have learned from this," says Barnes. "We ask for the continued patience of our residents as Health Department staff work through the challenges this massive undertaking brings."

(continued)

Tom Bodkin, Public Information Officer
TomB@HamiltonTN.gov

Cell: 423.315.3987
Desk: 423.209.8238

The Health Department plans to open additional vaccination days next week when shipments arrive and will update the public as soon as those dates are confirmed.

In the meantime, the public is asked to subscribe to the Health Department's mailing list <http://bit.ly/3nWWh5P>, visit the COVID-19 vaccination webpage: <https://bit.ly/3hrmQxJ> or follow on social media: [http://health.hamiltontn.org/AllServices/Coronavirus\(COVID-19\)/ConnectWithUs.aspx](http://health.hamiltontn.org/AllServices/Coronavirus(COVID-19)/ConnectWithUs.aspx) to receive the most up-to-date vaccine distribution information. The hotline opens again Saturday from 10AM-3PM at (423) 209-8383.

###