



**ALASKA NATIVE
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Alaska welcomes a third safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine Alaska's vaccination rates remain among the highest in the country

Alaska's Vaccine Task Force, co-led by Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) and the Alaska Tribal Health Consortium (ANTHC), continues to work closely with federal, state, Tribal and local partners to offer vaccine to all Alaskans as efficiently as possible.

With the increased supply from manufacturers and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's recent emergency use authorization of a third vaccine made by Johnson & Johnson, more vaccine with increased flexibility is now available to protect Alaskans. Earlier this week, Alaska became the first state in the country to make vaccine available to anyone 16 years or older who lives or works in Alaska.

As of yesterday, more than 32% of Alaskans 16 years or older had been immunized against COVID-19 with at least one dose of the vaccine. More than 22% of Alaskans 16+ are fully protected, which requires two doses for the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines and one dose for Johnson & Johnson Janssen vaccine.

"COVID-19 has had significant impacts on Indigenous communities and all vaccines have shown benefits in preventing the severe complications of COVID-19," said Dr. Bob Onders, Administrator for Alaska Native Medical Center. "These results are why the CDC recommends that individuals take the vaccine that is available to them as soon as possible. As unfortunately is true in many clinical trials, there were very few Alaska Native or American Indian trial participants from the United States, less than one percent of the total. More participants from those groups would be needed in order to have enough data to determine whether one vaccine is more effective for one group over another."

According to clinical trials, all three vaccines have proven highly effective at preventing serious illness and hospitalization and showed 100% efficacy at preventing death from COVID-19. Data has also shown that all three vaccines are generally effective against COVID-19 variants and work well across ages, races and ethnicities.

"We're excited about the Johnson & Johnson Janssen vaccine because it offers a third safe and effective option for Alaskans to get vaccinated quickly," said Dr. Anne Zink, Chief Medical Officer for DHSS. "The fact that it can be stored and transported in a standard refrigerator, and that it only requires one dose, provides Alaskans with more flexibility. Some people may need to get vaccinated quickly, have trouble returning for a second dose, or may simply want a 'one and done' option. The Janssen vaccine helps with all those situations."



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“Alaskans have choices – different vaccines are offered by different providers – but we certainly don’t want that to slow people down,” Zink added. “We’re in a race to vaccinate Alaskans against a changing virus so we bring this pandemic to an end.”