

UNIFIED COMMAND WALLA WALLA COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WALLA WALLA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Walla Walla County Equity Task Force

Reminder to Stay Home, Stay Healthy, Keep our Community Safe

WALLA WALLA, WA – The Walla Walla County Department of Community Health (DCH) would like to acknowledge the concerns raised by many members of the community regarding equitable vaccine distribution. DCH has implemented an equity task force and has partnered with community organizations that serve low-income and hard to reach populations.

With these efforts well underway, county health officials want to thank residents that have stepped up to help those in need. "We are a community," said Public Health Officer Dr. Daniel Kaminsky. "We can reach out to friends, family and neighbors, people who we think might need help." DCH is encouraging people to continue to find ways to help those that need assistance. County residents in need of help should reach out to a trusted contact to help schedule an appointment for the COVID vaccine or to find needed information.

Residents without Internet or computer access and without a trusted contact in the area, can call the DCH helpline (509) 524-2647 and leave their name, date of birth, phone number, and a message stating that they do not have access to internet or a computer. From there, eligible individuals will be referred to community partners to be scheduled for a vaccine appointment at an upcoming clinic.

While the vaccination sign-up process has been challenging, DCH is committed to finding solutions so that interested residents can be vaccinated. DCH staff are also collaborating in statewide vaccine distribution discussions with Washington State Department of Health staff, members of other local health jurisdictions, and with Washington residents that are impacted unequally.

The DCH equity task force is also engaged with a local Latinx task force that was formed in the summer of 2020 by Providence's Population Health team, with the intent of addressing health outcomes of the Latinx population and other affected populations. DCH is committed to creating a healthier Walla Walla county and will continue to evaluate and improve outreach efforts.

For the latest updates and announcements, visit the Walla Walla County COVID <u>website</u> or text COVIDWW to 888777.

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