

Contra Costa County expands vaccine eligibility to people 50 and above

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MARTINEZ, Calif. - Contra Costa County announced Monday that it has opened up vaccine eligibility to anyone 50 and older.

Officials said the eligibility is open to anyone ages 50 and older, who lives or works in the county, regardless of whether they have an underlying health condition.

Diane Burgis, Chair of the Contra County Board of Supervisors, said the county is able to expand eligibility thanks to an increase in vaccine supply from the federal government under a vaccine equity program for federally qualified health centers. The program, under the Health Resources & Services Administration, aims at getting the vaccine to underserved communities and those disproportionately affected by COVID-19.

Contra Costa county received 14,000 doses from the federal government last week. It also expanded eligibility to people ages 16 to 64 with underlying health conditions.

"We're working with what we have and since we have more doses, we've been able to put more vaccinations out," Burgis said.

In Solano County, there is a shortage of vaccine just as county officials expanded eligibility to people ages 50 and old last week. On Monday, officials said they have had to pause the scheduling of first-dose appointments due to a steep decline in vaccine supply from the state. officials have urged the state to send more doses after reporting a 60% drop in vaccine allocations in the last two weeks.

Burgis said while Contra Costa County sees more vaccines, it too has seen an unpredictable supply from the state.

"We're having a hard time pinpointing what we're going to have, but as soon as we get it we're jabbing people in the arms," Burgis said.

So far, 36% of people ages and older have been partially vaccinated in Contra Costa with the majority being seniors, and 20% of people have been fully vaccinated. More than 515,000 vaccine doses have been administered to date.

officials are encouraging people to sign up for a vaccine appointment as soon as they become eligible using the state's [My Turn website](#).