

# Against CDC Guidance, Some States Give COVID Vaccines to People 65 and Older

Carolyn Crist

December 29, 2020

*Editor's note: Find the latest COVID-19 news and guidance in Medscape's [Coronavirus Resource Center](#).*

Florida and Texas are providing coronavirus vaccines to residents who are ages 65 and older, according to [Business Insider](#).

[CDC guidelines](#) recommend that the first doses go to health care workers and people in nursing homes, followed by people ages 75 and older and essential frontline workers such as police officers, firefighters, grocery store employees and teachers. The third phase would include people between ages 65 to 74 and people between ages 16-64 with underlying medical conditions.

However, governors and their public health departments can decide how they want to prioritize vaccines in their state. Last week, Florida and Texas officials decided to allocate vaccines to people who are 65 and older.

"The focus on people who are age 65 and older or who have comorbidities will protect the most vulnerable populations," Imelda Garcia, the chair of the Expert Vaccine Allocation Panel in Texas, said in [a statement](#).

Texas and Florida are still vaccinating people in the first priority group, which includes health care workers and residents of long-term care facilities. A few vaccine sites in both states are already administering vaccines to people who are 65 and older.

In Lee County, Florida, the Department of Health began vaccinating the age group on Monday, according to [the Fort Myers News-Press](#). More than two hours before the vaccine clinic in Estero opened on Monday afternoon, the site reached capacity. Starting Tuesday, vaccine sites in Fort Myers, Cape Coral, Bonita Springs, Lehigh Acres and Estero will have about 400 doses each, the news outlet reported.

The Wise Health System in Decatur, Texas, also reached capacity quickly last week when it began giving vaccines to residents over age 65. People lined up more than two hours before the clinic opened, the system [wrote in a post](#) on Facebook.

"The response was overwhelming, but we did our best," the health system wrote. "Staff from all areas jumped in to help."

## SOURCES:

Business Insider, "Florida and Texas have started vaccinating people 65 and older against the coronavirus, breaking with CDC guidelines."

CDC, "When Vaccine is Limited, Who Gets Vaccinated First?"

Texas Department of State Health Services, "People 65 and Older or With Certain Medical Conditions in Next Phase for COVID-19 Vaccine."

Fort Myers News-Press, "Department of Health tweet tells all: 'Vaccination at Estero Parks and Recreation has reached capacity.'"

Wise Health System, "Facebook post at 9:56 p.m. on December 23, 2020."

*For more news, follow Medscape on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [YouTube](#).*

WebMD Health News © 2020

Cite this: Against CDC Guidance, Some States Give COVID Vaccines to People 65 and Older - *Medscape* - Dec 29, 2020.