

THE TRUSTEE

January 2021

A NEW YEAR IN A CHANGING WORLD

In 1849, Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Kerr wrote, “the more things change, the more they stay

the same.” Proverbial interpretations note, “turbulent changes do not affect reality on a deeper level other than to cement the status quo”, and “a change of heart must accompany experience before lasting change occurs.” So, is change part of staying the same?

The coronavirus has changed life for most of us. Now, there are several vaccines becoming available and, perhaps, life will change again; either back to the status quo or as a lasting change event. Societal reactions to the pandemic appear to forecast a broad spectrum of future behaviors where standards will be necessary to achieve a functioning society. Such has been the case with health emergency rules and will be involving the COVID-19 vaccines. As we learn more about the pandemic, events change, sometimes daily, but here is the latest, as of mid-January, on the coronavirus vaccine in Ulster County.

The Kate Walton Field House at Kingston High School and Ellenville Regional Hospital will be the two distribution centers. Health care workers (Phase 1a) have been served. As of January 11, those eligible in Phase 1b will include those over 75, first responders, public safety communications, sworn and safety personnel, corrections, child care providers, public transit workers, homeless shelter workers and residents, grocery workers, in-person college instructors, and P-12 school employees. And, as changes may be continuous in administering the vaccine, New York has now opened vaccinations to anyone 65+ years of age, those with underlying health conditions, and secondary shots will not be withheld for those receiving the initial shot, but will be used for more first timers. Ulster County has formed a distribution committee and KTF President Lauri Naccarato is representing NYSUT on the committee. Presently, the major problem is the federal government is sending only 300,000 doses/week to New York (Governor Cuomo, State of the State). As of now, no state has vaccinated more than 6% of their populace. Until the supply increases, the availability of the vaccine for distribution will be limited, thus, the number of distribution sites will be limited, as well. President-elect Biden, citing federal distribution problems, may opt for vaccinations absent any priority protocols. As of now, if you're eligible under Phase 1B, here's the process:

Ulster County has an on-line registration form. It states, “the purpose of the page is to gather contact information for individuals wishing to receive the COVID-19 vaccine as it becomes available to the public in phased roll-outs.” They will use the information to notify people when appointments become available. The Ulster Co. COVID-19 Request Form address is:

<https://covid19.ulstercountyny.gov/vaccination-assessment>

Prior to receiving the vaccination, you must complete the [New York State COVID-19 Vaccine Form](#). This form can be completed [online](#) and you will receive a submission ID, or you can fill out the form at your vaccination site. Individuals being vaccinated must bring proof of eligibility

to the vaccination site. This may include an employee ID card, a letter from an employer or affiliated organization, a pay stub, or a driver's license (showing your age), or other ID depending on the specific priority status. As with the testing and management of the coronavirus pandemic a year ago, absent is a federal plan for vaccinations. So, there will be 50 state plans. As of now, no state has vaccinated more than 6% of their population (PBSNewshour). Hopefully, as vaccine supplies become more available, vaccinations will increase, but the estimate is late spring/early summer before all are served. So, perhaps, the more things change, the more they stay the same!

It's recommended that people do not dismiss the use of face masks, social distancing, hand washing, and avoidance of large groups after receiving the vaccine.

STATUS UPDATES

A new year's reminder to update the Trust Office regarding any changes to member or dependent status. It includes, but is not limited to, status changes in marriage, dependents, births, adoption, legal separation, divorce, deaths, nursing home residency, address, contact information, and any declaration of disability through Social Security and Medicare.

IN MEMORIAM:

Virginia Martin | Heather Aiello | Dorothy Malgieri | Eric Borchert | Irene Parodi | Jacob Nolfo