



## Hidalgo County Commissioners Court

**Richard F. Cortez**  
*County Judge*

**David L. Fuentes**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 1*

**Eduardo "Eddie" Cantu**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 2*

**Everado "Ever" Villarreal**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 3*

**Ellie Torres**  
*Commissioner, Precinct 4*

**OFFICE OF  
COUNTY JUDGE  
RICHARD F. CORTEZ**

**Public Affairs Division**

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## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Tuesday, January 19, 2021

### **County schedules first drive-through community COVID-19 vaccine clinic in Weslaco**

**WESLACO** – Hidalgo County health officials, in conjunction with the City of Weslaco and the Weslaco Independent School District, will be hosting a drive-through COVID-19 community vaccine clinic this week in Weslaco, Hidalgo County Judge Richard F. Cortez said.

To reduce wait times and provide for an efficient operation, eligible residents will be required to pre-register for the vaccine beginning at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, January 20, at Bobby Lackey Stadium, 784 N. Westgate Drive in Weslaco. To pre-register, eligible residents must drive through the stadium's southern entrance on Panther Drive.

During the pre-registration process, eligible residents will be issued a wristband displaying a designated time for them to return to the stadium on Thursday, January 21 for their vaccinations. Since there is a limited number of vaccine doses available at this time, the clinic will provide wristbands on a first come, first serve basis for the doses available.

"We are seeing a pent-up demand for the vaccine in Hidalgo County and that is a good thing," said Judge Cortez. "But we must follow the state's guidelines for vaccine distribution meaning that much of our population must remain patient before getting a vaccine."

Hidalgo County will be following state protocol that targets healthcare workers. These workers will be asked to provide proof that they are in the healthcare industry.

This week's clinic also targets anyone born before 1955 and are now 65 years or older. In addition, people aged 18 and older with certain medical conditions are eligible to be vaccinated with the advice of their doctors.

**Based on previous vaccine clinics held at the eastern and western end of the county, health officials are advising the following:**

- Bring ID and proof of medical condition (current medication, a prescription from their doctor)
- Bring clearance letter from their physician
- People are encouraged to bring water and snacks
- There could be periods of waiting and sitting in your vehicle
- Children 18 and under should not be in the clinic

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- Those seeking vaccines with mobility concerns may bring one person to help them

**MEDIA AVAILABILITY WILL BE HELD FOR CREDENTIALLED MEDIA ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 21, AT 10 A.M. AND LASTING UNTIL 11 A.M. THIS WILL BE THE ONLY OPPORTUNITY FOR MEDIA TO CAPTURE B-ROLL AND INTERVIEW COUNTY OFFICIALS ABOUT THIS EVENT. MEDIA WILL BE DIRECTED TO A DESIGNATED MEDIA PARKING AREA ACCESSIBLE SOLELY THROUGH PIKE BOULEVARD.**

More information, including a form that can be printed and prefilled, is available on the Hidalgo County website at [www.hidalgocounty.us](http://www.hidalgocounty.us).

**The following is the state definition for healthcare workers who are eligible for vaccinations on Thursday:**

### **First Tier**

1. Paid and unpaid workers in hospital settings working directly with patients who are positive or at high risk for COVID-19. Such as but not limited to:
  - a. Physicians, nurses, respiratory therapists and other support staff (custodial staff, etc.)
  - b. Additional clinical staff providing supporting laboratory, pharmacy, diagnostic and/or rehabilitation services
  - c. Others having direct contact with patients or infectious materials;
2. Long-term care staff working directly with vulnerable residents. Includes:
  - a. Direct care providers at nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and state supported living centers
  - b. Physicians, nurses, personal care assistants, custodial, food service staff;
3. EMS providers who engage in 9-1-1 emergency services like pre-hospital care and transport;
4. Home health care workers, including hospice care, who directly interface with vulnerable and high-risk patients;
5. Residents of long-term care facilities.

### **Second Tier**

1. Staff working in outpatient care settings who interact with symptomatic patients. Such as but not limited to:
  - a. Physicians, nurses, and other support staff (custodial staff, etc.)
  - b. Clinical staff providing diagnostic, laboratory, and/or rehabilitation services
  - c. Non 9-1-1 transport for routine care
  - d. Healthcare workers in corrections and detention facilities;
2. Direct care staff in freestanding emergency medical care facilities and urgent care clinics;
3. Community pharmacy staff who may provide direct services to clients, including vaccination or testing for individuals who may have COVID;
4. Public health and emergency response staff directly involved in administration of COVID testing and vaccinations;

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5. Responders who provide mortuary or death services to decedents with COVID-19.

Includes:

- a. Embalmers and funeral home workers who have direct contact with decedents
- b. Medical examiners and other medical certifiers who have direct contact with decedents;

6. School nurses who provide health care to students and teachers.

***Also eligible for vaccines on Thursday under state protocol are:***

1. People 65 years of age and older;
2. People 18 years of age and older with at least one chronic medical condition that puts them at increased risk for severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19, such as but not limited to:
  - Cancer
  - Chronic kidney disease
  - COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
  - Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease or cardiomyopathies
  - Solid organ transplantation
  - Obesity and severe obesity (body mass index of 30 kg/m<sup>2</sup> or higher)
  - Pregnancy
  - Sickle cell disease
  - Type 2 diabetes mellitus

These recipients are strongly encouraged to consult with and secure permission from their respective doctors to receive the vaccinations.

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