

VACCINE NEWS



December 16, 2020

By now you have probably learned that COVID-19 vaccines will soon be ready for distribution to health care workers and residents in long-term care. We have long awaited this exciting news! We want you to know that Mather has taken the steps needed to have residents and employees included in the first group to receive the vaccine. We have partnered with Walgreens for our Illinois communities (The Mather and Mather Place) and CVS for Splendido in Arizona. We do not have specific details about which vaccine will be administered or when at this time. We anticipate that each of our communities will be on a different timeline.

This is an important time for us—a time to reflect on the hard work and commitment each of you have demonstrated these past 10 months. To look forward, knowing that the COVID-19 vaccine is coming soon and that employees and residents in our senior living communities will have access to the COVID-19 vaccine in the first phase. We are so proud of your efforts in keeping residents and your team members safe and well during this unprecedented time.

We are strongly encouraging all employees and residents to be vaccinated. The vaccine is an important part in stopping the spread of COVID-19.

We understand that some of you may be concerned about the safety of these new vaccines, as they have been developed and tested more quickly than those in the past. Experts have shared that the speed with which these vaccines were developed is not due to skipping important safety steps, but rather the result of focused, collaborative work performed by experts across the globe. Vaccines approved for emergency use by the US Food and Drug Administration undergo the same level of rigorous testing for safety and efficacy as other vaccines and have been tested with tens of thousands of people, including older adults. Two independent advisory committees of experts from academic institutions also monitor vaccines to ensure their safety.

Most COVID-19 vaccines available in the US require two separate doses, given about three or four weeks apart depending on the vaccine. Some participants of clinical trials have reported experiencing short-term side effects after being vaccinated, with more pronounced discomfort after the second dose. *These possible side effects include headache, muscle pains, fatigue, chills, fever, and pain at the injection site.* Sometimes there is misunderstanding about the cause of these reactions, as you may have heard someone say a vaccine has “made them sick” or given them the disease that the vaccine was intended to prevent. We want to be clear that this is not the case. **The**

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COVID-19 vaccine cannot give you a COVID-19 infection or disease. The vaccine works by helping the body create antibodies to fight off the virus. Feeling discomfort after getting the vaccine means that the vaccine is doing its job and your body is making antibodies. **If you have questions about the COVID-19 vaccine, please seek guidance from your health care provider.**

Mather, along with thousands of other long-term care providers, is participating in a program with the Centers for Disease Control to help efficiently distribute these vaccines to residents and employees **free of charge**.

Please know that the safety and well-being of employees and residents have been and remain our top priority.

We will send more information about the vaccination plan as we learn more. **We may be notified only days before our vaccine provider comes on-site to administer the vaccination. It is important that you begin thinking about your decision to receive the vaccine. Mather is hopeful you will choose to receive the vaccine, unless you have a medical condition or factor not to, so we can continue to help keep residents and each other healthy and well.**

Please watch for a short survey coming soon that will help us understand your interest in getting the vaccine.

Mary Leary
President and CEO