



Kent Newsletter

Friends and neighbors,

What a year it has been. Already.

I know you have all been waiting to hear about the vaccine rollout. Honestly, we have too.

Over the last two weeks, we have been getting constantly shifting, unclear information from the State Department of Public Health and the Governor's office on how this rollout will be implemented. As of last night, when all municipal CEOs and Emergency Management Directors had our weekly call with the Governor's leadership team, the DPH Commissioner, and other State agency heads, there continues to be more confusion than clear guidance.

Here's what we know right now, as of the Governor's press release just a few minutes ago:

- Phase 1b is prioritizing those who are 75 years old and older *to begin registering today through these three options:*
- Your Healthcare Provider: Many residents have already been or will be contacted to schedule an appointment by their healthcare provider if their provider is participating in the state's vaccine program. Not all providers are administering the vaccine. A list of participating providers is available at ct.gov/covidvaccine. Residents are urged not to contact their physician or healthcare provider directly for COVID vaccine appointments.
- Online: A form can be accessed online at ct.gov/covidvaccine that allows individuals to schedule an appointment through the web-based Vaccine Administration Management System (VAMS).
- Telephone: Those without internet access can call Connecticut's COVID Vaccine Appointment Assistance Line at 877-918-2224. The phone system was created in partnership with the Department of Public Health and United Way of Connecticut and is specifically targeted to provide support for eligible vaccine recipients who have limited technology access, or who have language, disability, or other barriers that could prevent them from using existing self-scheduling options successfully. The line will take calls on Monday - Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and will offer a call-back option when all contact specialists are busy serving other callers. The team will aim to return calls as soon as possible, with the goal of same-day response.

It is likely this phase will last for many weeks, and the mantra we are passing along that has been the message from the Governor's team is "please be patient".

Our state's allocation is 40-50 vaccines each week (we received a one-time bonus of 44,000 this week because we met federal benchmarks for getting people vaccinated). Estimates are that there are approximately one million people to be vaccinated in this Phase. This illustrates the massive scope of this undertaking.

UPDATES ON INFECTION RATES AND TESTING:

Below is our daily case rate, which is based on a rolling two-week average - going back to the beginning of November:
ending 11.12 - 12.9

ending 11.26 - 28.3
ending 12.10 - 25.7
ending 12.24 - 33.4 *spike attributed to uptick at South Kent School
ending 01.07 - 10.8

While the fall-off is great news, the numbers at the state aggregate level are more realistic as to what to expect to see in the coming weeks as we start to see the new COVID-variants arrive and spread. We have been told these variants are much more contagious than the original virus.

This leads back to the message that has been consistent throughout the pandemic:

Wear A Mask | Wash Your Hands | Watch Your Distance

The COVID testing site at the Transfer Station has tested almost 1,500 people so far from Kent, the region and beyond. The lab vendor, Sema4, had some issues with getting results pushed out to people, but their customer service folks have been great about addressing anyone we hear has had problems, and the company is working on fixing the issue.

The testing site will be open for the holiday on Monday, and we are confirmed that the site will be in place through at least February.

2021 will bring better times, I am confident of that, but we must be realistic and recognize that these next weeks and months ahead will continue to be challenging.

Our community, YOU all, have been truly amazing staying safe, caring for others, and supporting our local businesses. Let's keep this our focus and we will get through this together!

Please know I am incredibly grateful to hear from you all - for your kind words and your tough words, your supportive messages and emails, and your calls with questions. You all keep me knowing when I'm steering our ship on course, and when I need to make adjustments, as I navigate these uncharted waters.

Remember...
...take a breath,
...give folks a minute,
...assume some positive intent.

Stay well,

Jean

Important Dates

Monday Jan 18, 25 | FREE COVID19 testing | 3:00p-7:00p | Kent Transfer Station

This testing is state sponsored and free to anyone who comes to be tested (don't tell anybody, but the best time to come is after 4:00). First Responder priority lane for fire/EMS/law enforcement.

Monday January 18 | Town Hall Closed in observance of Martin Luther King Day



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One way you can help yourself and your community is by downloading the COVID Alert CT app, which notifies you if you have been in close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19. Click the image for details.

visit our website: www.townofkentct.org

