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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **DuPage County Received its First COVID-19 Vaccine Shipment**

**DuPage County**— Today, DuPage County Health Department (DCHD) received its first shipment of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). The vaccine was authorized on Friday, December 11, by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) through an emergency use authorization (EUA) after conducting a thorough evaluation of the available safety, effectiveness and manufacturing quality information.

“This is the day we’ve been waiting for since the pandemic began. The vaccine brings new, tangible hope to DuPage County as we receive the first of many shipments of the COVID-19 vaccine,” said DuPage County Chairman Dan Cronin.

“We have been preparing for months with our local health systems to distribute approved vaccines for emergency and critical care staff,” said Sam Tornatore, DuPage County Board of Health President. “This first delivery of vaccine is the result of tireless work from our public health officials, health systems, law enforcement, the state, and everyone who has helped achieve this historical event.”

The receipt of 13,650 vaccine doses took place at a DuPage Medical Group (DMG) facility. DMG has partnered with DCHD to provide ultra-cold storage that meets the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine requirements. DCHD staff will be safely and securely transporting vaccine to all hospitals in DuPage County, including Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital, AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center GlenOaks, and AMITA Health Adventist Medical Center Hinsdale, Edward Hospital, Elmhurst Hospital, and Northwestern Medicine Central DuPage Hospital.

Established in 1945, DuPage County Health Department promotes physical and emotional health; prevents illness injury and disability; protects health from environmental risk factors, and strives to assure the provision of accessible, quality service.

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“We’re honored to partner with the DCHD and DuPage County hospitals to safely and securely bring the COVID-19 vaccine to our communities,” said Donna Cooper, DMG Chief Operating Officer. “Several months ago, we proactively purchased the ultra-cold freezers needed to safely and securely store the Pfizer vaccine. As a result, we’re now able to store this initial vaccine supply for DuPage County. Following CDC guidance for vaccine prioritization, DMG has plans in place to safely vaccinate our physicians, associates and patients once additional supply becomes available.”

The initial vaccine shipments will be used to provide the first vaccine doses to the priority groups of healthcare personnel and long-term care facility residents in Phase 1a. DCHD officials anticipate it will take several weeks to reach the estimated 43,000 healthcare personnel in DuPage County. Long-term care facilities will receive vaccinations through a Federal program, called the Pharmacy Partnership Program.

"This life-saving vaccine will protect our healthcare workers who have selflessly dedicated themselves to care for and preserve the lives of their patients," said DuPage County Executive Director Karen Ayala.

“We are confident that this vaccine will begin to provide some much-needed relief from COVID-19. However, until we receive enough vaccine for the general public, it is imperative that we each do our part in protecting our families, friends, and co-workers by wearing masks, practicing physical distancing, hand washing, and avoiding in-person gatherings. These preventive measures will be especially important to follow during the upcoming holidays,” said Ayala.

Additional vaccine is expected to arrive on weekly basis, from both Pfizer and a second manufacturer, Moderna, whose EUA application is currently under review by the FDA. As more COVID-19 vaccines become available, the consecutive priority groups in Phase 1b and 1c will be determined and also be provided the opportunity for vaccination. In preparation for this, the Health Department is working with IDPH to implement a state-wide vaccine registration and scheduling tool.

For additional information about the COVID-19 vaccine, DuPage County’s distribution plans, and to sign-up for weekly updates, visit [www.dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccine](http://www.dupagehealth.org/covid19vaccine).

Anyone who is seeking COVID-19 testing is reminded of the various options throughout DuPage County, including the two drive-thru community based testing sites in Wheaton and Villa Park. For more information, visit [www.dupagehealth.org/covid19testing](http://www.dupagehealth.org/covid19testing).

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Additional COVID-19 information and resources can be found at [www.dupagehealth.org/covid19](http://www.dupagehealth.org/covid19).

Due to heightened security protocols for the distribution of the vaccine, DuPage County has provided B-roll video and photography [here](#).

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