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NEWS RELEASE

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12-15 Age Group Now Eligible to Receive Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine

Effective immediately, all individuals 12 years old and older are eligible for vaccination in Kern County. This expanded eligibility comes after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) vaccine safety review panel and the Western States Scientific Safety Review Workgroup recommended yesterday that the vaccine is safe and effective in protecting this age group against severe illness, hospitalization, and death.

On May 10, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) amended the Pfizer vaccine's Emergency Use Authorization to allow administration for 12- to 15-year-olds following clinical trials that proved it safe for this age group with only non-serious side effects like fatigue and headache. This morning, Kern County Public Health Services will inform all local providers administering the Pfizer vaccine that they may proceed in vaccinating this new age group. Parents and legal guardians can schedule appointments for those 12 and older to receive the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine using the statewide booking system www.MyTurn.ca.gov starting today.

"Vaccination is the safest and most effective way to build immunity against COVID-19," says Brynn Carrigan, Director of Kern County Public Health. "Ending this pandemic requires using all of the tools we have available, including practicing healthy habits, masking, distancing, and, most importantly, getting vaccinated. Get vaccinated for yourself, your family and our community."

The Kern County Fairgrounds Mass Vaccination Clinic offers the Pfizer vaccine from the comfort of your car. The clinic operates Wednesday thru Sunday, 9:30am to 4pm. Appointments can be made at www.MyTurn.ca.gov but are not required. Other vaccinating providers are available throughout the community and can be found on MyTurn.ca.gov or on the Vaccinating Providers Map at <https://phweb.kerncounty.com/Html5Viewer/index.html?viewer=COVID19Vaccination#>.

In an effort to address our residents' ongoing questions related to the vaccines, Public Health has launched a COVID-19 vaccine nurse hotline that is available from 7AM to 7PM, seven days a week. Our community is encouraged to call or text 661-677-4177 to ask their vaccine related questions.

Please visit the states website: www.covid19.ca.gov or www.kernpublichealth.com to learn more.

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