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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Third Dose of COVID-19 Vaccine Recommended for Certain Immunocompromised People**

Following the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendation of an additional dose of the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines for immunocompromised people, Kern County vaccination sites will begin administering third doses to those who qualify. The FDA has amended the Emergency Use Authorization for these vaccines to allow for a third dose, which can be administered at least 28 days following the second dose of the vaccine.

Although the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines work very well in the majority of individuals, there is evidence that individuals who are severely immunocompromised may benefit from a third dose. Certain medical conditions or the treatments used for specific conditions may prevent the immune system from responding adequately to two doses of the vaccine and therefore require an additional dose to provide adequate protection from COVID-19. Individuals who qualify for a third dose include organ transplant recipients, people undergoing cancer treatment, people with advanced or untreated HIV and those on certain immunosuppressive medications. Individuals should be vaccinated with the same vaccine they received for the first and second dose; if that is not possible, receiving a third dose with another mRNA vaccine is acceptable.

Kern County Public Health encourages individuals who qualify for a third dose to speak to their healthcare provider for more information and obtain the third dose. Third doses of the vaccines will be accessible through vaccination sites that currently offer Pfizer or Moderna vaccines. Eligible individuals will be able to provide a self-attestation that they have a qualifying medical condition at these sites.

A follow-up dose is not recommended for those who have received a single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine at this time. The FDA and CDC are still evaluating data on the effectiveness of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine in immunocompromised individuals. An additional dose of the COVID-19 vaccine is also not recommended for the general public at this time.

“This new authorization is an added layer of protection for those who are at the highest risk for severe, prolonged illness from COVID-19,” said Brynn Carrigan, Director of Kern County Public Health Services. “We continue to recommend all eligible persons be vaccinated to protect themselves from COVID-19.”

To find a vaccination site near you or to make an appointment at vaccination sites, visit [www.kernpublichealth.com](http://www.kernpublichealth.com) or [www.MyTurn.ca.gov](http://www.MyTurn.ca.gov).

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