



FACILITY UPDATE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Central Virginia VA Health Care System completes more than 36,000 vaccinations, all Veterans, spouses, some caregivers now eligible for COVID-19 vaccine as supply allows**

**RICHMOND, Virginia, (April 7, 2021)** – The Central Virginia VA Health Care System has expanded eligibility for central Virginia Veterans, spouses and caregivers to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. With changes brought on by the recently signed SAVE LIVES Act, all Veterans, regardless of their character of discharge, all spouses of Veterans, Veteran caregivers and recipients of Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Department of Veterans Affairs (CHAMPVA) benefits are now eligible. Definitions of the eligible groups are:

**Eligible Veterans:** Anyone who served in the U.S. military is eligible to be vaccinated through VA.

**Eligible Spouse:** For COVID-19 vaccine eligibility, we define a spouse to include marriage, same-sex and common-law marriages. This includes a widow or widower of a Veteran. If you characterize your relationship as spousal, you can receive the vaccine. Please go to the [Sign up to get a COVID-19 vaccine at VA](#) page to register and a CVHCS appointment scheduler will call when appointments are available.

**Eligible Caregivers:** For COVID-19 vaccine eligibility, we define a caregiver as a family member or friend who provides care to the Veteran. Caregivers may help the Veteran with personal needs like feeding, bathing, or dressing. They may also help the Veteran with tasks like shopping or transportation.

CVHCS will continue to prioritize enrolled Veterans to receive the vaccine. There is no current timeline for when CVHCS will begin scheduling non-Veterans and current vaccination scheduling is dependent on available supply.

CVHCS is currently vaccinating Veterans of all ages at the Richmond and Emporia vaccine clinics. The clinics in Charlottesville and Fredericksburg is scheduling for Veterans age 40 and up.

Regardless of new eligibility, CVHCS encourages all Veterans, spouses and caregivers to take the first opportunity, whether through the VA or through county and state-run programs, to receive the vaccine.

“We have been vaccinating a lot of Veterans from both southern Virginia and northern North Carolina, and I’m very proud of the dedication our team has shown through the entire COVID-19 pandemic,” said Taylor Clements, pharmacist at the Emporia clinic. “We will continue to serve our Veterans and will serve their spouses and caregivers when supply allows. Because the areas we serve are so rural, we are relying on community partners to spread the word to all who are eligible and to encourage everyone to get the vaccine at the first opportunity.”

Media and stakeholder point-of-contact for this release is Tim Parish, Public Affairs Officer, Central Virginia VA Health Care System; [timothy.parish@va.gov](mailto:timothy.parish@va.gov); 804-675-5242. (Tim Parish cannot schedule eligible persons for a COVID-19 vaccination appointment. Please go to the [Sign up to get a COVID-19 vaccine at VA](#) page to register.)