



February 26, 2021

Valley Mountain Regional Center Testing and Vaccination Plan

The Valley Mountain Regional Center (VMRC) Testing and Vaccination Plan is a brief overview of how we are currently working with consumers, families, service providers and local entities to inform them about the availability of COVID-19 testing and vaccinations. In addition, the plan includes our strategic communications strategies, significant events, activities and initiatives we have implemented as of this date and a few actions we may consider if we determined they are helpful and necessary. The plan was submitted via email to DDSC19Directives@dds.ca.gov.

VMRC Testing Efforts

On December 17th of 2020 VMRC began running testing events because our local licensed providers began to report that while they were currently testing their staff regularly many were having trouble accessing timely testing resources. The first event was held in our parking lot of our Stockton office (702 N. Aurora Street, Stockton) and it was a drive through style test swabbing the throat (less invasive than the not the nose). The first event tested 100 people and resulted in a 20% positive rate. Our second event was in Modesto and we tested 50 and 10 came back positive. Testing is available to our consumers, families, providers, and staff.

We have completed 6 testing events and the demand has decreased to the point where we will be offering the events once a month. Altogether we have tested about 250 people and about 45 people tested positive. Today there are several community testing sites and the licensed providers are getting their tests completed more frequently but our community has asked that we continue this service because they feel more comfortable at our offices that are familiar to them.

VMRC Vaccination Efforts

- VMRC started contacting all five county public health offices (Amador, Calaveras, San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Tuolumne Counties) as early as December 15th, 2020. Informing them of our intention to assist them with vaccinating our community upon approval of a vaccination.
- After the first week in January we followed up with our initial contact sending the public health officials an advocacy letter together with the ARCA letter of advocacy for

vaccination and described our positivity rate experience our vulnerable population was enduring.

- The following weeks we engaged with County Public Officials answering their questions and sending documents and spread sheets with the information they were requesting including website links, phone numbers of care home providers to the mountain counties.
- Our Mountain County (Amador, Calaveras, Tulolumne) care home providers were one of the first to receive vaccinations in the last week of December/first week of January.
- VMRC conducted targeted Informational sessions through Zoom webinars regarding the COVID-19 Vaccine – including introduction to what is COVID-19, what it does to our body, high risk individuals, what does the vaccine do, safety of the vaccine and where to get the vaccine. Targeted audience were VMRC Staff, VMRC Consumers and families, and VMRC Providers. Recordings were posted on our website.
- VMRC Staff, Comprehensive Programs, Early Start Vendors, ABA providers, SLS, Respite, Interpreters, Other VMRC vendors have been vaccinated through the counties, specifically San Joaquin and Stanislaus Counties.
- On January 11th San Joaquin County determined that all family caregivers, direct support professionals, and IHSS workers could get the vaccination on that day. We provided individuals a letter proving they were served by VMRC for the rare incident where the county requested such proof.
- Continuous collaboration with our local counties regarding vaccination, vaccine distribution and equitable access to the vaccine as they adjust and change their processes.
- Collaboration with the other ARCA Clinical Directors in multiple meetings and emails regarding vaccine safety, consents, distribution, and access.
- Signing consents for COVID-19 Vaccine for consumers who are unconserved, no family member, unable to give their own consent, or have no durable power of attorney.
- VMRC provided letters to family care givers and providers for them to get the vaccine as part of Phase 1a vaccine distribution following the directive from DDS. This caused confusion and some rejection of the vaccine temporarily because the DDS Directive Letter was less inclusive than the San Joaquin and Stanislaus County determinations (this was later resolved).
- We are tracking these individuals with consents and sharing this tracker with case management for follow up and documentation in SANDIS.
- We were involved in advocacy for our consumers be included in Phase 1b of the state vaccine distribution and informed our community of the issues related to vaccination policy.
- We have published 49 weekly “Health Advisory” newsletters in English, 47 weekly “Health Advisory” newsletters in Spanish, and the current and archived editions can be found on our website at: <https://www.vmmc.net/covid-19-coronavirus/> and more on our archive page at: <https://www.vmmc.net/covid-19-archive-page/>. The Health Advisory includes weekly reports and updates on scientific evidence and latest facts and science about the COVID-19 vaccine, COVID-19 treatment and other topics related to COVID-19

are being shared in the Clinical Director section and status of community exposure in the Executive Director sections.

- Collaboration with the Care home providers with regards to Vaccine advocacy, working with them in advocating with the Pharmacy Partnership Program to have it in their care home and educating them that they need 3 vaccine clinics and the reason for that – staggering staff due to possible vaccine adverse effect and staff missing work.
- Clinical Director presents and answering questions of providers in the weekly Residential Providers Info Session
- Provided our Service Coordinators a guide to educate our consumers regarding the COVID-19 Vaccine during their calls.
- Executive Director provides a weekly update in Self-Advocacy Council 6 Zoom Calls to educate them regarding COVID-19, the importance and safety of vaccine and what to do after they get vaccinated. The Clinical Director has provided extended presentations to SAC6.
- Collaboration with the local county public health offices in order to assist them in the vaccine distribution especially with the anticipated March 15th access to Phase 1b and individuals with disabilities. Sharing that information to the staff and community
- Shared information as to how and where to get the vaccine, and easy to read / plain language information about COVID-19 AND COVID-19 VACCINE.
- Updated our Isolation/Quarantine guide based on CDC guidelines and CCL PINs.
- Emphasizing the importance of continued wearing mask, hand washing, and physical distancing even after vaccination.

Regional Vaccination Information for Our Community

We continue to inform our service coordinators and community that vaccination implementation, while impacted by national and state level policy, is actually locally driven and each county may be at a different capacity compared to the priorities and rules set forth by the federal and state government. Each county has a little different approach but our service coordinators are also informing everyone to use the state site www.myturn.ca.gov and follow their county policy as well since this new statewide approach is in transition through March.

Amador County Public Health

<https://www.amadorgov.org/services/public-health/covid-19/vaccine-information>

Amador County has links to register and dates. They are currently only accepting people ages 65+ as of now and they will update when they have more vaccines. They include links to Safeway and other pharmacies. This link also describes the required documentation such as Proof of Amador County residency and verification of age will be required.

Calaveras County Public Health

<https://covid19.calaverasgov.us/Vaccines>

Calaveras County has a link for “COVID-19 Vaccination Appointments” for persons 65 and older interested in getting the COVID-19 vaccine, please call Mark Twain Medical Center to schedule an appointment. Call (209) 754-2536 and provide your full name, date of birth, and a phone number to best reach you.

San Joaquin County Public Health

<https://sjready.org/events/covid19/vaccines.html>

San Joaquin County has links as to the vaccine providers including pharmacies, and how to register for an appointment with them. Each one has their own link and a description of their capacity and eligibility and that can be found in this website when you scroll down.

San Joaquin County Vaccine Interest Sign Up

Form: <https://sjready.org/events/covid19/registration.html>

San Joaquin County is encouraging individuals to sign up on this form if they are not in the current priority list but would like to get notified and vaccinated when available because of the "SEVERLY LIMITED" vaccine supply in this county.

Stanislaus County Public Health

<http://www.schsa.org/coronavirus/vaccine/>

"Stanislaus County Public Health's COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics will be open for individuals identified in Phase 1A, Seniors aged 65 and older, and individuals age 50 and over who are identified in Phase 1B. Vaccines are available to Stanislaus County Residents only. If you reside in a different county but work in Stanislaus County, you may be eligible to receive the vaccine if your job falls under the current Phases. Proof of employment is checked by self-certification."

Tuolumne County Public Health:

<https://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/250/Public-Health>

Currently doing vaccinations for Phase 1a and 1b which includes those age 65 and older as well as the education & childcare, emergency services, and food and agriculture sectors. If you meet the criteria for Phase 1A or 1B Tier 1 and are interested in getting the COVID-19 vaccine, please fill out the form below. Please complete one form per person. Public Health staff will follow up with you when vaccine becomes available. COVID-19 Vaccination Proof of Eligibility Required:

The vaccination appointments are only for people who work or live in Tuolumne County, regardless of immigration status. To ensure Tuolumne County is administering vaccines according to State guidelines, proof of eligibility is now required at the vaccination clinics. Proof of Tuolumne County residence or employment is required (" Driver's License/Real ID, Employment paystub, Note from employer, Employee ID, Any document that verifies you as a Tuolumne County full-time resident. Vaccine interest form:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=f7_in8RLhUCeCq6rg_E6Hg1TRUz5AN9Fh5_US45ucbRUNUpEMk1MQ0Y1QkcwMjY3TE5YS1hHUkZaUi4u