

Governor Phil Murphy

Press Pool Coverage: Governor Murphy Visits Mary L. McLeod Bethune Life Center Community-Based Vaccination Site

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New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy arrives at the Mary L. McLeod Bethune Life Center, and shortly after Mayor Steven Fulop arrives as well.

Jersey City Health and Human Services Director Stacy Flanagan informs the governor and state Health Commissioner Judy Persichilli that they will witness four vaccinations:

- Florence Holmes, assistant director of the Bethune Center who has been administering saliva tests
- Tawana Moody, the new leader of Jersey City's police department - "You are the inspiration for her getting the shot today, she's been hiding from it," Flanagan told the governor
- Fred Jackson, a 92-year-old WWII veteran
- Father Esterminio Chica, an immigrant and the bishop of Christ the King Church and Our Lady of Sorrows.

The group heads upstairs and is greeted by Ari Matiyahu who will offer them a tour. He is with the Bespoke Health team that Jersey City has contracted for its vaccination program.

The governor greets Sen. Sandra Cunningham who is there for her second shot.

Matiyahu explains that there are three zones in the vaccination site. The zone they are standing in, Zone 1, is for registration. It includes chairs spaced apart for those waiting in line to be checked in. Staff sit at a table to register them.

Zone 2 is for the inoculation of the vaccine and Zone 3 is for post-vaccine seating.

Matiyahu says there is a 97% return rate for second doses.

"That's the highest we've heard," Persichilli said.

The city is currently vaccinating 250 people a day at the site but has the capacity to do 800 to 1,000, Matiyahu told the governor.

"If we expand to more pods think about it 10,000 people a day just for Jersey City," he says.

The group heads over to Zone 2 where Florence Holmes receives her second shot.

Governor: "No issues with the first one?"

Holmes: "No."

The group claps after she receives her shot. The governor bumps elbows with Holmes and says "Well done, well done, God bless you."

Murphy watches the other three vaccinations, which are at separate tables and partitioned off from each other and the rest of the room.

After viewing the vaccinations, Matiyahu tells the health commissioner that the city receives 600 to 700 calls a day at a vaccination call center that the city opened last week. He says the city has had a 0% cancellation rate.

The governor then heads to the hall for a televised interview before exiting the building.

Teri West
Reporter
The Jersey Journal

VIDEO

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ABC 7

PHOTOS

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Reena Rose Sibayan
The Jersey Journal

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