

Governor Phil Murphy

Press Pool Coverage: Governor Murphy Marks Start of COVID-19 Vaccination Effort for Sworn Law Enforcement and Fire Professionals

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Gov. Phil Murphy toured a vaccine "mega" site at a former Sears store in Morris County where health officials hope to vaccinate more than 2,000 people per day in coming weeks and months.

Several first responders received the vaccine Friday, including Thomas Lyons, an emergency medical technician with the Pequannock Township fire and rescue squad.

"It's been a long 10 months," Lyons said. "After months of dealing with sick patients and people who are struggling to breathe, it's a relief to know that I can go forward and do my job safely. It's great that we've gotten to the point where we can vaccinate health care workers and first responders. Now I'm hoping my 80-year-old mother can get vaccinated too."

The 30,000 square-foot lower floor of the former Sears store at the Townsquare Mall in Rockaway features 20 vaccine stations, some of which are behind curtain for privacy. Several areas are marked off for vaccine recipients to wait 10 or 15 minutes while being observed for any side effects.

"It actually hurt less than the flu shot," said Jay Alderton, a firefighter and EMT in Morris Township. "It's an honor to be able to get it."

About 1,000 people per week will get the vaccine initially, but officials hope to see that number rise to more about 2,400 per day over the next several weeks, said State Police Sgt. Marc Pellegrino. That will depend on how many doses that state receives from the federal government.

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The Associated Press
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VIDEO

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PHOTOS

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Sarah Blesener
The New York Times

GO PHOTOS

Phil Murphy | Flickr
(<https://www.flickr.com/photos/govmurphy/>)
Edwin Torres
Office of Governor Phil Murphy

Biographies and headshots of the vaccine recipients can be found here
(https://nj.gov/governor/news/news/562021/docs/20210108_MorrisCountyMegasiteVaccineRecipients_final.pdf).

Governor Phil Murphy

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