

COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force

General (Ret'd) Rick Hillier
Chair

25 Grosvenor Street
11th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 1Y6

COVID-19VaccineTaskForce@ontario.ca

Groupe d'étude sur la distribution des vaccins contre la COVID-19

Général (à la retraite) Rick Hillier
Président

25, rue Grosvenor
11^e étage
Toronto ON M7A 1Y6

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It is hard to believe that this will be my final report of 2020. It has been a year like we have never seen. Ontarians have experienced great loss this year. When we look back at 2020, we will remember the family members and friends that succumbed to this terrible virus. We will also remember and thank all the health-care workers, essential front-line workers, the people who stock our grocery shelves, deliver food, drive transit and help Ontario continue to move forward each day.

On December 23, 2020, Health Canada approved the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. Ontario received approximately 53,000 doses of Moderna this week with a second shipment expected in the middle of January. The Moderna vaccine does not need to be stored at extremely cold temperatures and can be transferred more easily. This means it can be taken directly to priority groups in long-term care homes, retirement homes, other congregate care settings, rural and remote locations, and other places where the most vulnerable and less mobile residents live.

Guided by our [ethical framework](#) and the best available data, the Task Force will continue to prioritize the most vulnerable populations first, who have higher risk of negative health outcomes from contracting the virus and are at a higher risk of spreading the virus. Groups receiving the early vaccine doses in the first few months of the Ontario immunization program will include:

- Residents, staff, essential caregivers, and other employees of congregate living settings that provide care for seniors;
- Health care workers, including hospital employees, staff who work or study in hospitals and other health care personnel;
- Adults in First Nations, Metis, and Inuit populations, beginning with remote/fly-in communities; and
- Adult recipients of chronic home health care.

Further priority populations will be identified within this phase based on available vaccine supply and informed by the ethical framework which was publicly released on December 30, 2020. Over time, the vaccine supply will increase to the point that all Ontarians who wish to be immunized, will be able to.

I wish everyone a healthy and safe New Year.

General (Ret'd) Rick Hillier
Chair of the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force