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## NEWS

# COVID vaccine: Shots begin for those 65 and older at Florida State University

*“I think there’s a light at the end of the tunnel, finally,” Professor Neil Charness said.*

**Byron Dobson** Tallahassee Democrat

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The first shots in the arm for employees and students 65 and over were given Wednesday at Florida State University.

The university is providing the vaccines through a partnership with the Florida Department of Health-Leon County to expand the county’s distribution and allows more community members to receive access to the vaccine sooner.

“This is another important step in our efforts to promote a healthier and safer campus,” FSU President John Thrasher said in a release. “We’ve tested thousands of individuals, opened our own testing lab and now we’ve added a vaccination program.”

The university also has received a supply of vaccine doses from Tallahassee Memorial HealthCare and Capital Regional Medical Center for health care workers.

This week, University Health Services is scheduled to vaccinate 200 individuals, a group that includes FSU’s 65 and older population and frontline health care workers. Last week, UHS vaccinated 100 university-affiliated health care workers.

Thrasher, 77, also was vaccinated Friday at the health center. He tested positive on Oct. 6 and continued to conduct university business at home.

**More:** FSU President Thrasher and wife Jean 'feeling good' after being cleared of COVID-19

**COVID update:** 2 Leon residents die; hospitals report staff vaccination numbers

This week’s appointments were booked within an hour of eligible individuals receiving notification of the opportunity. Among the first recipients was Neil Charness, the William G. Chase Professor of Psychology and director of the Institute for Successful Longevity.

“I think there’s a light at the end of the tunnel, finally,” Charness said.

“If you get the chance to be vaccinated, please do it. If you’re fortunate enough to be at Florida State University and you have an opportunity to get it here, it’s a great system we have.

“I think this step of vaccine development, and now vaccine distribution, is going to make an enormous change in the lives of seniors like myself and enable us to get back and involved in the community much, much sooner perhaps than other people,” he said.

**Previously:** FSU expects doses next week, FAMU also to get shipment

**Also:** Scientists extol safety of COVID-19 vaccine in panel talk

Beginning Tuesday, the university will move its vaccination site to the Tucker Center. COVID testing held at the center will continue in the afternoon.

FSU will schedule 100 vaccination appointments each morning with plans of ramping up to a target goal of 400 per day.

The university said eligible faculty, staff and students will receive individual notification of future appointment availability.

“This is a true example of what can come together through collaborative partnerships,” said Dr. James C. Zedaker, who is leading the university’s testing and vaccination programs.

**Vaccine tracker:** See how many people in Florida have been vaccinated, by county and state

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