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Walmart to begin distributing vaccines in Florida this week



Updated: 9:37 PM EST Feb 9, 2021

ORLANDO, Fla. — Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said Tuesday more than a third of all Walmart stores in Florida will begin distributing COVID-19 vaccines on Friday.

"So beginning on Friday, there'll be 119 Walmart stores across 34 counties that will begin offering COVID-19 vaccinations for senior citizens," Governor DeSantis said.

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DeSantis made the announcement during a news conference at a Walmart in Jacksonville Tuesday. He said an initial supply of 25,000 doses will be going to Walmart.

The vaccines will be available to people 65 and older.

In Orange County, 17 Walmart and Sam's Club locations will be distributing vaccine doses, according to Mayor Jerry Demings.

DeSantis said only Duval County has more locations than Orange County.

[See all of the Walmart and Sam's Club locations offering vaccines in Florida](#)

Eligible customers can schedule a vaccine appointment directly via the [Walmart](#) and [Sam's Club](#) websites once appointments are available. A membership is not required to get a vaccination at Sam's Club.

Walmart touted its role in helping more people get the shot. According to the company, 90% of the country lives within 10 miles of a Walmart.

"Getting this vaccine into Walmart centers which are almost in every single community throughout the state is definitely very vital to having early and easy access to this vaccine," said Dr. Rajiv Bahl.

Bahl is an emergency medicine physician and treats coronavirus patients in Central Florida.

"Currently the more we get, the better it is for the entire state. We need to get these vaccines into arms, in as many arms as that," he said. "Having more vaccines in the state of Florida is definitely a right step in the right direction to get this pandemic in our rearview mirror."

Dr. Christie Alexander agreed. She is a family physician and an associate professor at FSU College of Medicine. She said the landscape of where Walmart stores are located is significant.

"Walmarts are closer to the population that are more at risk of getting severe illness from COVID-19, those with multiple cormorbidities that would be more at risk if they came down with COVID-19," she said. "So the fact that Walmart serves those populations and those populations can get their vaccine more easily will decrease the effect on our hospital systems as well."

The vaccines Walmart is receiving are part of the U.S. Federal Retail Pharmacy Program. Winn-Dixie and Publix will also be provided vaccines for distribution in Florida under the federal program.

2/10/2021

Florida Walmart's to give vaccines starting this week

DeSanits also said the state is expanding its [Publix vaccination partnership](#), from the current 325 stores in 23 counties to almost 600 stores in 41 counties.

This is the [full list](#) of Walmart and Sam's Club locations that will be offering the COVID-19 vaccine.