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CITY OF MUSCATINE PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
DECEMBER 23, 2020**

MUSCATINE EMS STAFF AMONG FIRST TO RECEIVE VACCINE

Those working closest to COVID patients first to receive Moderna shot

MUSCATINE, Iowa – The first doses of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine were given out today (December 23, 2020) at Trinity Muscatine Public Health and UnityPoint Trinity Muscatine Hospital with members of the Muscatine Fire Department among those frontline workers to receive the vaccine.

“The Public Health Department is administering vaccines today to Tier 1 identified medical professionals that work within our county,” Christy Roby Williams, Director of Muscatine County Public Health said.

Vaccines are provided by appointment only at the Public Health facility.

Fire Captain June Anne Gaeta coordinated the scheduling for Muscatine firefighters and other departments in the county, and was one of the first to receive the shot Wednesday morning. The vaccination is not mandatory but many of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel have opted to receive the vaccine.

Captain Gaeta had no negative side effects from the administration of the vaccine nor did any of the other first responders who had the shot Wednesday morning.

“It didn’t hurt at all,” Capt. Gaeta said.



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The initial shot of vaccine will be followed by a second shot in 28 days.

Muscatine County received 500 doses of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine with 300 doses provided to Trinity Muscatine Public Health and 200 doses to UnityPoint Trinity Muscatine Hospital. Additional doses will arrive in the coming weeks.

“We will also be administering vaccines next week to the same tier of medical personnel as we have many healthcare professionals to get through with a limited amount of vaccine,” Roby Williams said.

Roby Williams also said that there are many people to vaccinate in the county and the process of administering will be strategic.

“We will communicate directly with the selected tiered groups and general populations as we are guided by the Iowa Department of Public Health,” Roby Williams said.

Roby Williams added that the entire process will take several months to accomplish.

“With the county’s support, we will accomplish a successful roll out of mass vaccinations,” Roby Williams said.

The Public Health Department recommends that while the vaccine is being distributed and even after receiving the vaccination, the public should continue with COVID-19 mitigation procedures. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus.

To help reduce exposure please utilize the following CDC guidelines: wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds; maintain social distancing and avoid close contact if possible; cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others; cover coughs and sneezes with your elbow or a tissue; clean and disinfect common surfaces; monitor your health daily; and get your flu vaccine.