



PAHO

PRESS RELEASE

Countries in the Americas notified of first COVID-19 vaccine allocations through COVAX

Vaccines delivery schedules announced for countries participating in COVAX

Washington, D.C., January 31, 2021 (PAHO) — COVAX, a coalition led by WHO and Gavi to ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, has notified countries in the Americas of the estimated dose allocation for the first phase of vaccine delivery in a letter to health authorities, the Pan American Health Organization reported today. Thirty-six of the countries and territories participating in COVAX received letters about the estimated number of doses of AstraZeneca vaccine that they could be receiving from the second half of February through the second quarter of 2021.

The AstraZeneca vaccine is still under review by WHO for emergency use approval (EUL), which is expected to occur in the next few days. The number of doses and delivery schedule are still subject to EUL and manufacturing production capacity, as well as establishing supply agreements between the producers, PAHO, and UNICEF. According to the COVAX statement, it is estimated that around 35.3 million doses will be arriving in the Americas in this first stage.

"With more than 45 million confirmed cases and more than one million deaths, countries and territories throughout the Americas, particularly the poorest among them, are experiencing an unprecedented health, economic and social crisis," said PAHO Director Carissa F. Etienne, "The start of vaccine delivery through the COVAX mechanism is a hopeful step in the fight against this virus and PAHO is proud to facilitate an effort that is urgently needed for our region."

Countries in the Americas participating in COVAX that received letters are Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Commonwealth of The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, Bolivia, Brazil, British Virgin Islands, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Granada, Guatemala,

Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Montserrat, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucía, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

In anticipation of vaccine delivery, the countries of the Americas participating in the COVAX mechanism began the process of preparing to receive and deploy the vaccines. As COVAX communicates about the start of delivery of the first doses of vaccine, countries must ensure that they are ready to use the vaccines. PAHO provided technical assistance during the preparation phase.

Countries participating in COVAX were also invited to submit proposals for the "First Wave" initiative, a global pilot program to receive a limited number of doses of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine in advance of their total allotted quota. Seventy-two countries from around the world submitted applications that were evaluated by an independent committee based on criteria of pandemic risk, impact, and mortality rates in recent weeks, as well as the number of doses available and the feasibility for immediate use by the countries.

The committee selected 18 countries globally, of which four are from the Americas: Bolivia, Colombia, El Salvador, and Peru. The total number of doses of Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine to be received by these four countries will be 377,910 and are expected to arrive beginning mid-February, subject to supply agreements between the manufacturers, UNICEF, and PAHO, according to COVAX.

"The Pan American Health Organization has provided technical support to the Member States to support them in each phase of their participation in the COVAX Mechanism and in preparation of their national COVID-19 vaccination plans," said PAHO Assistant Director Jarbas Barbosa.

"The use of these vaccines will allow us to advance in the fight to confront this pandemic, but we must still maintain and strengthen public health measures - such as the use of masks, avoiding crowds, social distancing and frequent hand washing - to prevent transmission, increased cases and deaths from COVID-19," added Barbosa.

PAHO's Revolving Fund, together with UNICEF, is procuring all vaccines on behalf of COVAX for countries in the Americas.

The Americas region will need to immunize approximately 500 million people to control the pandemic. The COVAX Mechanism is a global effort to accelerate equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines and ensure that they reach all those who need to receive them.

The goal is to provide vaccines for at least 20% of the population in each country participating in COVAX to protect those most at risk for severe forms of COVID-19.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, 37 countries will receive vaccines through COVAX. Of these, 27 will do so with their own financing and 10 will do so at no cost due to their economic condition or population size.

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Links

[PAHO Revolving Fund - PAHO/WHO | Pan American Health Organization](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccines - PAHO/WHO | Pan American Health Organization](#)

[Coronavirus Disease \(COVID-19\) pandemic - PAHO/WHO | Pan American Health Organization](#)

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The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) works with the countries of the Americas to improve the health and quality of life of its population. Founded in 1902, it is the world's oldest international public health agency. It serves as the Regional Office of WHO for the Americas and is the specialized health agency of the Inter-American system.