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Press Release

COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

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State to make free flu vaccine available

Manufacturer provided free vaccine; state passing it along

ANCHORAGE — Sanofi Pasteur, a national flu vaccine manufacturer, is giving 20,000 doses of adult flu vaccine to the state Division of Public Health. The division is in turn making the vaccine available free of charge to organization or providers to administer to adults who have not yet been vaccinated against influenza.

The manufacturer issued a nationwide call for states to apply for the free vaccine. Alaska applied for, and was granted, the 20,000 doses.

This vaccine is licensed for use in adults ages 18 through 64.

“The vaccine will be available to providers and organizations statewide on a first-come, first-served basis,” said Dr. Joe McLaughlin, chief of the Alaska Section of Epidemiology, Department of Health and Social Services. “Organizations wishing to participate must have a licensed medical provider who can sign the request form — accepting responsibility for proper storage and appropriate administration of the vaccine.”

The vaccine is available to any individual or organization that wants to offer flu vaccinations to clients, employees, staff, volunteers, patients, vendors, customers, or others. Public or private social service agencies, hospitals, companies, building or facility management offices, faith-based groups, individuals, arts organizations, clubs, governmental or educational institutions, public or private schools, and public or private healthcare providers are all welcome to apply for the vaccine.

Community emergency response organizations can use this vaccine to conduct emergency mass distribution exercises.

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Individuals or organizations requesting vaccine must fill out a request form available at: <http://www.epi.alaska.gov/id/iz/FREEAdultFluVaccineOrderForm.pdf> and fax it to the number provided.

Those allocated vaccine will be able to pick up their supply from the state's vaccine warehouse in Anchorage, or the state will pay for shipping to locations outside the Anchorage area. Providers may not charge for the vaccine itself, only for administration of the vaccine should they wish to.

State public health centers will continue to focus on vaccinating children, the elderly, and those at high risk for complications from the flu. Although not free, health center services are available on a sliding-scale.

Interested individuals or organizations should contact the Section of Epidemiology at 907-269-8622 as soon as possible before supplies run out.

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