

# Eisenhower to become public vaccination site under Blue Shield transition

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Eisenhower Health will become a public COVID-19 vaccination site when Blue Shield of California takes over as the state's third-party administrator of inoculations this week.

Eisenhower Health spokesperson Lee Rice said the change will take effect Friday, opening the Rancho Mirage hospital's vaccination efforts to all eligible groups. The hospital was previously vaccinating only its oldest, most vulnerable patients, but recently aligned with the state's expanded tiers of access.

Statewide, vaccine eligibility expands to Californians ages 50 and older on Thursday.

By next Monday, Eisenhower's clinic will operate five days a week and have expanded hours, including two days that it will run until 6:30 p.m. to accommodate more workers.

"We expect to receive larger shipments more consistently to be able to provide for these expanded vaccine appointments and are already starting to see improved vaccine allocations from the county," Lee said.

Blue Shield has been communicating with Riverside County and its vaccine providers leading up to this transition, county Public Health Officer Dr. Geoffrey Leung told reporters last week. He said Blue Shield has been collecting information from state-approved providers the last few weeks in order to prepare for the change and know, for example, how many doses each provider is capable of administering each week.

**FYI:** [How to book a COVID-19 vaccine appointment in the Coachella Valley](#)

**Not sure if you're eligible?** [Riverside County doctor weighs in on gray-area scenarios](#)

"We've been trying to plan for this for a long time, and Blue Shield has made it an important point they definitely do not want to disrupt any vaccine efforts," Leung said.

There will be a transition period, but residents should not notice a difference between March 31 and April 1, Leung said. The biggest change will be expanded eligibility, he added.

"We are reassured Blue Shield has been working very closely with us to ensure the county has input into how vaccine will be allocated," Leung said.

Tenet Healthcare, which operates Desert Regional in Palm Springs and JFK Memorial in Indio, has been receiving consistent allocations, according to spokesperson Todd Burke.

Burke said that the hospital system expects a "smooth transition" sometime in April.

As part of a memorandum of understanding with the state, [county officials agreed last week to continue administering doses at their existing vaccination sites](#). The responsibility for distributing doses to community providers — like Eisenhower — will fall to Blue Shield.

The state's registration and appointment system, [My Turn](#), will become the main hub for appointments; however, Riverside County residents can still visit the website [rivcoph.org/covid-19-vaccine](http://rivcoph.org/covid-19-vaccine) to view available appointment dates and times.

For those needing assistance, the California COVID-19 Hotline is 1-833-422-4255.

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