

Los Angeles forced to suspend vaccine centers over dire shortage

11 February 2021

Facing a severe vaccine shortage, Los Angeles moved to temporarily close five major inoculation centers including its giant Dodger Stadium site Thursday, even as California this week topped the nation's pandemic death toll.

"We're vaccinating people faster than new vials are arriving here in Los Angeles, and I'm very concerned right now," said Mayor Eric Garcetti, slamming the [vaccine](#) supply as "uneven... unpredictable and too often inequitable."

Los Angeles received only 16,000 doses of vaccine this week, Garcetti said, despite having administered just over 13,000 doses per day in recent weeks. The city has so far delivered 293,000 shots among its 4 million residents.

First injections of the Moderna vaccine will run out Thursday evening, the mayor added, with sites including the Dodgers baseball stadium—one of the nation's largest such operations—not expected to reopen until Tuesday earliest.

Until then, inoculation services in surrounding Los Angeles county will be restricted to second shots.

So far, only [health workers](#), nursing home residents, and residents over 65 are eligible to receive the vaccine in the county.

Even so, [health authorities](#) have announced plans to extend vaccination to other "essential" professions, including teachers, within the next two to three weeks.

Most Los Angeles schools have been closed since last March due to the pandemic, with political and public pressure to reopen schools mounting.

Despite a recent sharp decline in statewide cases, California this week surpassed New York as the US state with most reported COVID deaths.

While New York was hit severely in the pandemic's early months, California—the nation's most populous state—became a major COVID-19 infection epicenter this winter.

More than 45,000 Californians have died due to [coronavirus](#).

The state has been criticized for its slow and overly complicated rollout of the vaccine, with a bid to recall Governor Gavin Newsom reportedly nearing the threshold required for a vote.

While many [elderly people](#), police and emergency rescue workers are still on the waiting list, some cannabis store workers have already been vaccinated, the Los Angeles Times reported Thursday.

In California, cannabis is not only legal but classed as a medicine, giving dispensary staff "medical worker" status and early access to vaccines.

The state this week also confirmed its first cases of the South African variant.

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