

another dead

By Sarah Cavacini on Saturday, January 9, 2021

Putnam County health officials reported one new coronavirus death Friday as the first week of the Moderna vaccine distribution finished.

A 69-year-old woman was the latest death announced as 75 COVID-19 cases were added in Putnam.

The COVID-19 testing site, 1101 Husson Ave. in Palatka, will be closed Monday as health officials help distribute the vaccine.

The county's executive director of public safety, J.R. Grimes, helped at the vaccine distribution site all week and said 800 vaccines were given through Thursday. He expected about 400 to be given Friday.

"It's been a community effort," Grimes said. "I know what you see on the frontlines, but there's a lot of people in the back doing a lot of work, too."

The Florida Department of Health in Putnam County received 1,300 doses to give to first responders, health care workers and residents 65 or older. The remaining vaccines should be distributed Monday, Grimes said.

The director said a team of people, including the National Guard, Putnam County Fire and Emergency Medical Services, the Florida Department of Health and volunteer nurses in the county, is helping with the distribution process.

"I'm super happy for our community getting the vaccine they need and super stoked about the people who are putting all the work in," Grimes said. "We couldn't have done it without all the partners who are in this thing working together."

Florida cases increased by more than 19,000 on Friday and the statewide death toll reached 22,804, while Putnam's death toll was 84, according to the Florida Department of Health.

The Putnam County Board of Commissioner chairman, Larry Harvey, has been stopping by the vaccine site all week and commended everyone who helped the process come together.

While the process is going well, Harvey said the biggest issue he saw is people missing their appointments to receive the vaccine. He said it is important people do not miss their given time because vaccines will be given by appointment only.

Residents can register to get a vaccine at putnam.floridahealth.gov or by calling 329-1904 from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Monday through Friday. A second vaccine shot will be needed 28 days after the first is administered.

“As soon as we get more vaccines, we’re ready to go,” Harvey said. “... We’ve got a well-oiled machine and we’re going to see some good things happening here.”

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