



## Smoking his way to the front of the vaccine line

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## House of the week

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167th YEAR NO. 3 CAPE MAY, N.J. Serving America's National Historic Landmark City WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2021 \$1.00

# Supply shortage delays county vaccinations

By DAVID NAHAN  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY COURT HOUSE — Cape May County residents should go to the county's website to learn how to register for the COVID-19 vaccine.

Although this county is the leader in the state for vaccinations based on population, the main reason for any delays in getting vaccinations is that the demand is far outstripping the supply, a fact noted in neighboring Atlantic County and statewide.

The website is [capemaycountynj.gov](http://capemaycountynj.gov). Many of the links on the site will take residents to the state website, [covid19.nj.gov](http://covid19.nj.gov). The state's vaccination site is [covid19.nj.gov/vaccine](http://covid19.nj.gov/vaccine).

The county site has links explaining how to register for the

vaccine; where, how and when to get vaccinated; COVID-19 testing locations; COVID-19 vaccine locations for eligible recipients; who is eligible to get the vaccine in New Jersey; and to see the county's COVID-19 dashboard.

The dashboard tells residents the daily counts for active and new cases of COVID-19 by community, along with deaths, and tracks cases back to the start of the pandemic. It includes data by category.

Last week, the Cape May County Department of Health announced that the county's vaccination program was the fastest among counties in New Jersey based on the population.

As of Friday, the state Department of Health said just more than 5,000 doses of the vaccine had been administered in the county.

On Thursday, Jan. 14, a study showed the county had administered 4,251 vaccines per 100,000 individuals, a rate higher than any other county, and had administered more second doses (704) per 100,000 residents. The closest in first doses was Morris County, which had 3,911. Atlantic County had the second-best rate for second doses with 585.

### Atlantic County

Atlantic County has not been able to keep up with the high demand for vaccines.

By Sunday, it reported that all the vaccination clinics scheduled for Jan. 19-21, administered by the Atlantic County Division of Public Health, were filled.

In Atlantic County, the site to make appointments for both CO-

VID-19 testing and for vaccinations is [atlantic-county.org](http://atlantic-county.org), which has links for registration.

"The state estimates there are now more than 4 million people in New Jersey eligible to receive the vaccine, but the state is only receiving 100,000 doses a week," County Executive Dennis Levinson said in the Sunday release. "When people hear they are now eligible, they may not understand that is no guarantee of an immediate inoculation."

Gov. Phil Murphy has stated there is a supply and demand problem and that it could take six to eight weeks for individuals to receive their initial shots. He has urged patience, according to the release.

"Our phones have been ringing off the hook with people looking for appointments, not only

through the county but elsewhere. They are frustrated that no matter where they look there is nothing available," Levinson said, "but we can only provide vaccinations if we have the supply to do so."

### Who is eligible

As of Jan. 14, according to the state, individuals 65 years of age and older are now able to get the vaccine, as are individuals ages 16 to 64 with certain medical conditions as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that increase the risk of illness from the virus.

Conditions include:

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD (chronic obstructive

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Jack Fichter/CAPE MAY STAR AND WAVE

## So gallantly streaming

The American flag, state flag and the POW-MIA flag fly in front of the Cape May Lighthouse, which has stood sentinel over the Jersey Cape since 1859. The Cape May Star and Wave is beginning its 167th year of publishing.

# Council awards design contract for fire station

No bids sought on \$350,000 job; mayor says he knows the experts

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — In a unanimous vote, City Council awarded a \$350,000 contract to architect Robert Conley to design a 14,000-square-foot fire station to be built on the site of the current fire station. A virtual, special council meeting was held Jan. 12.

In November, voters approved a referendum to build a \$5 million fire station and preserve the adjacent fire museum. The contract notes the \$350,000 architectural fee is included in the overall cost of \$5 million.

Bids are to be received in June with construction beginning in September and substantial completion by November 2022, according to the contract. The city has \$80,981 in unexpended funds from a previous bond for professional services that should be sufficient to cover the initial schematic design phase, according to council's resolution.

Councilman Shaine Meier, who endorsed a \$15 million public safety building prior to the voter referendum, voted in favor of Conley's contract.

"I said way back, when we had the two initiatives on the ballot, that whatever initiative would win, and I'm fulfilling that statement, so I'm committed to building a firehouse for \$5 million," he said.

Councilman Chris Bezaire said council put a lot of time and effort into quickly reviewing Conley's contract, including input from city engineer Vince Orlando and solicitor Chris Gillin-Schwartz.

Mayor Zack Mullock said the city's volunteer fire department hired Conley for a consultation in 2017.

"I look forward to working with you, Mr. Conley, and building a fire station that the city of Cape May is proud of and meets all the needs of our firefighters," Mullock said.

He said the city's Historic Preservation Commission would be brought into the design phase. He said the project could be slowed by any environmental issues found on the site.

During public comment, resident Bonnie Cassells asked if the contract for architectural services to

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# City may purchase church for parking lot

By JACK FICHTER  
Cape May Star and Wave

CAPE MAY — The city is considering purchasing Allen AME Church to provide parking in the neighborhood as well as to provide storage space during construction of a new fire station.

At a Jan. 5 virtual council meeting, Mayor Zack Mullock said council needs to make a decision on purchasing the church as quickly as possible since there are other parties interested in purchasing the historic building.

"I think it's going to be vital to the

city going forward in regard to parking for the library," he said. "Let me be clear, the church itself would be preserved and fixed."

Mullock said parking behind the church could be used for a new library set to be built in a restored Franklin Street School and may be a location for equipment and personnel as the city builds a new fire station across the street.

He suggested the city offer a contract for purchase of the church as soon as possible.

In June 2018, the church caught fire

as the result of a moving truck driving down Osborne Street catching a guy wire from a utility pole, which pulled the pole over into the church. The high-voltage lines ignited the church's steeple tower.

The church was sprayed with foam to prevent rekindling. Later in the afternoon, the church's tower, heavily damaged by the blaze, was demolished.

City Council awarded a \$21,400 contract to the engineering firm of Mott MacDonald to perform a preliminary

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