

Sutter to cancel up to 95,000 vaccine appointments in Northern California

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Sutter Health is canceling up to 95,000 vaccine appointments at mass vaccine sites across Northern California because of ongoing supply issues and insufficient vaccine allocation over the past few weeks, the health care provider said in a statement Tuesday. Of those, 90,000 are for second doses and 5,000 are first doses.

"We're concerned the impact this will have on our elderly and vulnerable patients," a spokesperson for Sutter said.

Sutter is calling patients and will put them on a priority list when new supply arrives.

The spokesperson for Sutter said the state advised the provider to use its initial allocations of vaccine for first doses. "We were told the state would fulfill our supply for second doses," the spokesperson said. But the allocation for second doses has yet to arrive and only a trickle of vaccine has been distributed to Sutter

sites in recent weeks.

Sutter administers the COVID-19 vaccine to its patients at mass vaccine sites; there are several in the Bay Area, including the Santa Clara Convention Center, the Alameda County Fairgrounds, the San Mateo Event Center and the San Francisco Produce Market.

Because of the shortage of supply, Sutter first paused all new first dose appointments in February and is now indefinitely postponing scheduled first dose appointments through March 9.

The provider is in the process of alerting patients with second dose appointments scheduled through March 9 that their appointment needs to be canceled.

Sutter said it plans to call patients in seven to 10 days to reschedule.

"We have been urgently requesting the additional allocations we need from the State in order to prevent canceling the more than 90,000 second dose vaccination appointments currently on our books," Sutter said in a statement. "This is an extremely unfortunate situation for our patients, and one that is avoidable if we can get additional vaccine supply."