Covid vaccines in the USA. Report by correspondents Hudson Tactix 14 May 2021

Hudson Tactix has been actively monitoring the situation surrounding Covid vaccinations for vessel crew. This is a dynamic issues that changes almost on a daily basis.

**Background**

The are 3 types of Covid vaccine in the US (Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson—J&J). Pfizer and Moderna are 2 shot vaccinations with the second shot 3 or 4 weeks later depending on the vaccine. J&J is a one shot vaccine. The efficacy rate of a Pfizer and Moderna is about 95% after 2 shots and about 52% after one shot. The J&J efficacy rate is about 65%.

The US Government controls the supply of vaccines. It distributes them to the States who in turn distribute them to the local governments (counties/cities). The local governments then distribute them to the health providers (hospitals, mass inoculation centers, pharmacies, medical providers). Because the US government is in charge of the initial distribution, the States and in turn the  local governments generally do not know the quantity or the type (Pfizer, Moderna, J&J) until a few days before receiving them. As a result, most people do not know what vaccine they are getting until they show up. The distribution in the US has been done on a tiered basis and is now open to any US adult who wants to be vaccinated. The vaccine itself is free.

**Current Situation (at May 2021)**

We are now at a pivot point where depending on location, vaccine is becoming available to others not US citizens, like foreign crew members. Unfortunately, in most localities quantity and type is still the great unknown. This makes trying to schedule crew for vaccine a challenge, at best. A complicating issue is the fact that in order to get a vaccine, the crew must either disembark and be transported to the provider, or a provider must go to the ship. Whether crew members can disembark is dependent upon Customs & Border Patrol (CBP) approval.

**Going Forward**

It is Hudson’s intention to assist Member’s to locate a vaccine and assist in coordinating vaccinations.

**Port of Long Beach**

Presently, the City of Long Beach and Long Beach Health department are offering free J&J vaccine on a drive through basis to crewmember at the Long Beach Convention Center. Crew must be able to disembark the vessel and must be transported to the location. Transportation will need to be arranged through the local agents. We have been told  that the transportation costs for a crew of 20 is in the $500 range (multiple trips required).

We are also working with one of our providers to have them obtain J&J vaccine and go on board vessels to inoculate the crew. The provider has indicated they are willing to go aboard the vessel at berth or at anchorage. At the moment there is not an adequate supply of vaccine. While the provider will not charge for the vaccine, there will be a charge for attendance and possible transportation cost. Hudson will charge a nominal administrative charge per crew member to assist.

**Ports of Port Everglades/ Port of Miami**

Vaccines are being provided by the Florida Dept. of Health. The J&J and Pfizer vaccines are available, but agents are encouraging the J&J (for obvious reasons). The vaccine itself is free in both ports. At Port Everglades, health care providers are boarding vessels to vaccinate the crew. We understand there is no associated charge.

In Miami crew are being transported to the terminal and inoculated. There is a charge for transportation cost dependent on the time and number of crew.

**Other US Ports**

As of today, while there are a few clinics or mass vaccine sites nationwide that may be able to see some crew, these are day by day, quantity and type driven. We expect that over the next few weeks the picture will become clearer and a better path will emerge allowing seafarers to become vaccinated. We will continue to work with our medical providers so we can assist your members as needed. We will continue to provide relevant updates.

If Members have any questions, they can contact us at  crewmedical@hudsontactix.com.

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