



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

## Senator Brad Hoylman's Snapshot Survey on COVID-19 Vaccine Sign-up Process Finds 43% of Respondents are Unable to Schedule an Appointment

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL January 20, 2021

| ISSUE: **SENATOR BRAD HOYLMAN, SD 27, CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC; COVID-19, CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC; COVID-19; VACCINE DISTRIBUTION**

NEW YORK -- Today, State Senator Brad Hoylman (D/WF-Manhattan) released the results of his snapshot survey of New Yorkers eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine who have attempted to schedule an appointment to receive the shot.

Of the over 400 respondents who answered an online survey conducted from Friday, January 15 to Tuesday, January 19, the survey shows that 43% have been unable to schedule a vaccine appointment. Specifically:

- 43% of respondents were unable to schedule an appointment.
  - That includes 40% of respondents age 75+, the age cohort of New Yorkers most vulnerable to hospitalization from COVID-19;
- 74% described the experience of scheduling a vaccine appointment as negative, while just 17% of respondents reported their experience as positive;

- 24% of respondents who scheduled a vaccine reported that their appointment was canceled after they made it;
- 40% of respondents report they spent four hours or more trying to schedule an appointment, with many attempting for several days to no avail.
- Of those who scheduled a vaccine, only 7% did so through the phone hotline while 30% of all respondents reported having trouble calling vaccine hotlines.

**Senator Brad Hoylman said:** “As one respondent to my survey put it, getting a vaccine appointment is harder than getting Hamilton tickets. This snapshot survey found a deep frustration and confusion with the sign-up process for a COVID-19 vaccine appointment. 43% of respondents were unable to schedule a vaccine and almost as many people spent four hours or longer to schedule an appointment. More than four times as many respondents reported frustrations with the phone hotlines than were able to actually use them to schedule a vaccination. We must simplify how New Yorkers schedule vaccines. Also, this survey only includes eligible New Yorkers with internet access. My heart breaks for the 27% of NYC households that do not have broadband internet at home.”

Select responses to open-ended questions in the survey are below:

*"This system is disorganized and very hard for seniors. Now it is impossible to get an appointment. **Harder than getting Hamilton tickets.** I'm disappointed. My mother aged 73 and father aged 72 can't get appointments. They are both retired doctors and are patient but I'm frustrated that this system can't accommodate all it purports to serve "*

*"It's absurd to have to fill out all the information requested on the various sites only to then be informed that there are no available appointments. And, if/when you need to start over again at the same site, you shouldn't have to fill all the information out a second, third, fourth, etc. time. Whoever designed this system should be ashamed of themselves. What a waste of time and energy. **Incredibly frustrating and counter-productive.**"*

*“The experience was hideous & I could write volumes about how incompetently handled this whole process has been disseminating accurate information & facilitating the sign up process. **I am computer literate, but websites kept crashing, offering dates which proved to be unavailable and requiring you start all over again filling out the application form.** What are elderly people supposed to do to navigate the system when I and everyone I know found the sign up process unintelligible, unreliable, frustrating, incompetently administered, etc...How many disenfranchised people have been further disenfranchised by this process?”*

*“They need to centralize so [I] don’t have to keep filling out [the] same form. And/or sites should show "no availability" before you spend time filling out the form!”*

*“There are no appointment slots open in the five boroughs through June 1. I was told I must keep trying in the event there is a cancellation. That means I will probably need to invest a minimum of 2 hours each day on the phone in the hopes that I will find an opening before someone else does. If I do my own search on the internet, it will take longer because each vaccination location manages its own appointment schedule so I must search through each location's schedule a month at a time. It all seems very disorganized this way.”*

###