Department of Health, Emergency Rule 64JER21-7

Paramedic and Emergency Medical Technician Administration of COVID-19 Vaccines

STATEMENT OF FACTS AND REASONS FOR FINDING IMMEDIATE DANGER

Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a severe acute respiratory illness that can spread among humans through respiratory transmission and presents with symptoms similar to those of influenza. COVID-19 is a communicable disease with significant morbidity and mortality. The Surgeon General has declared a statewide Public Health Emergency due to the spread of COVID-19. As a result, it presents an immediate, severe danger to public health that warrants an accelerated effort to administer COVID-19 vaccine using all available resources, including paramedics and emergency medical technicians.

STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR CONCLUDING THAT THE PROCEDURE USED IS FAIR UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES

COVID-19 presents a public health threat to the state of Florida. There is an immediate need to set forth procedures for the control of this communicable disease in the State of Florida; specifically, to facilitate the widespread administration of the COVID-19 vaccine. Adoption of an emergency rule that permits certified paramedics and emergency medical technicians to administer COVID-19 vaccine under appropriate medical direction at State-operated vaccination sites is fair under the current circumstances, which require immediate action to address the Public Health Emergency.

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(1) As used in this Rule:

(a) "Medical Direction" means oral instruction either in person or through remote two-way voice communication, and written instruction by standing order, of a licensed physician.

(b) "Supervise" or "Supervision" means the inspection, oversight, and direction of the administration of COVID-19 vaccine.

(c) "COVID-19 vaccine" means a qualified product that limits the harm COVID-19 might otherwise cause, as defined by 42 U.S.C. 247d-6d(i)(1)(A).

(d) "COVID-19 vaccine administration training" means the training developed by the Department of Health, Bureau of Emergency Medical Oversight, or training that requires completion of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 Vaccine Training Modules followed by an observation period by a currently practicing healthcare professional who holds an active license or certification permitting the professional to administer vaccines who confirms competency in the administration of the COVID-19 vaccine.

(2) A paramedic or emergency medical technician (EMT) certified in Florida may be employed by or enter into a written agreement with the Florida Department of Health, the Florida Division of Emergency Management, the contracted health care service provider(s) of either of these agencies, or an emergency medical services (EMS) provider licensed in Florida, to administer COVID-19 vaccine in a non-emergency environment as provided by this Rule.

(3) A paramedic acting under medical direction may constitute, draw, and administer COVID-19 vaccine.

(4) A paramedic acting under medical direction may supervise an EMT in the intramuscular administration of COVID-19 vaccine.

(5) An EMT acting under medical direction and acting under the supervision of a paramedic or other health care practitioner authorized by law, may only administer COVID-19 vaccines intramuscularly. An EMT may not determine whether administration of COVID-19 vaccine is medically appropriate, constitute COVID-19 vaccine, or draw COVID-19 vaccine.

(6) Paramedics and EMTs must assure themselves that monitoring and aftercare are available for vaccine recipients prior to administering COVID-19 vaccine and must comply with established protocols when administering COVID-19 vaccine.

(7) Paramedics and EMTs who are employed by or enter into a written agreement with the Florida Department of Health, the Florida Division of Emergency Management, or the contracted health care service provider(s) of either of these agencies must complete COVID-19 vaccine administration training provided by the Department of Health, Bureau of Emergency Medical Oversight.

(8) Paramedics and EMTs who are employed by licensed EMS providers must complete COVID-19 vaccine administration training provided by the EMS provider.

(9) Paramedics and EMTs must obtain written documentation of their successful completion of COVID-19 vaccine administration training prior to handling COVID-19 vaccine or COVID-19 vaccine supplies and must present documentation of their successful completion of the training upon request of the department.

(10) Paramedics and EMTs employed by the United States or its personnel, contractors, or volunteers are not precluded from administering COVID-19 vaccines at sites operated by the United States as permitted under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness (PREP) Act, 42 U.S.C. § 247d-6d, and its implementing secretarial Declarations and are otherwise exempt from this Rule.

Rulemaking Authority 401.35, FS. Law Implemented 401.27, FS. History-New _____.