The first COVID-19 vaccine will begin arriving Monday with additional shipments over following days

By Matthew Perone, Mike Jablok and Mark Scalfaro
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The nation’s first COVID-19 vaccine will begin arriving Monday, after the government gave the final go-ahead to the shots needed to end an outbreak that has killed nearly 300,000 Americans.

Those first doses will go to shipping companies UPS and FedEx, which will begin delivering Pfizer’s vaccine to nearly 1,000 distribution centers across the states, said Army Gen. Gustave Perna of Operation Warp Speed, the Trump administration’s vaccine deployment program. An additional 420 sites will get shipments Tuesday, and the remaining 66 on Wednesday. Initially, about 5 million doses were expected to be shipped nationally.

It was unclear exactly who would receive the first doses, though health care workers expected to be spared so they can continue treating patients with the disease.

The announcement Saturday kicked off massive logistical operation involving the federal and state governments, private companies and health care workers to quickly distribute limited vaccine supplies throughout the U.S. It often feels in a country graphing wave after wave of hospitalizations and deaths, which are overwhelming hospitals and stretching staffs that usually only get respite as people gather over the holidays.

Perna compared the vaccine distribution effort to D-Day, the U.S.-led invasion of France with nearly 1 million troops and hundreds of thousands of supplies, “and that’s exactly what they did.”

“I have news of what we have been waiting for. We have an aggressive plan put into place, reflecting the scale of the mission. It’s going to be one of the largest efforts the world has seen,” President Trump said Saturday.

On Sunday, Trump administration officials said Saturday, after the government gave the final go-ahead to the shots needed to end an outbreak that has killed nearly 300,000 Americans.

The first doses will go to shipping companies UPS and FedEx, which will begin delivering Pfizer’s vaccine to nearly 1,000 distribution centers across the states, said Army Gen. Gustave Perna of Operation Warp Speed, the Trump administration’s vaccine deployment program. An additional 420 sites will get shipments Tuesday, and the remaining 66 on Wednesday.

Initially, about 5 million doses were expected to be shipped nationally.

It was unclear exactly who would receive the first doses, though health care workers expected to be spared so they can continue treating patients with the disease.

The announcement Saturday kicked off massive logistical operation involving the federal and state governments, private companies and health care workers to quickly distribute limited vaccine supplies throughout the U.S. It’s often feels in a country graphing wave after wave of hospitalizations and deaths, which are overwhelming hospitals and stretching staffs that usually only get respite as people gather over the holidays.

Perna compared the vaccine distribution effort to D-Day, the U.S.-led invasion of France with nearly 1 million troops and hundreds of thousands of supplies, “and that’s exactly what they did.”

“I have news of what we have been waiting for. We have an aggressive plan put into place, reflecting the scale of the mission. It’s going to be one of the largest efforts the world has seen,” President Trump said Saturday.