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**TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO HOLDS MEDIA AVAILABILITY**

**Mayor Bill de Blasio:** Well, this day is finally here. Good morning, everyone. An amazing, amazing day. I don't know about you, but I am feeling an incredible sense of relief, a sense of hope, such joy for our nation, for our city, and just feeling so appreciative to Joe Biden and Kamala Harris for, right now, today, starting to change this country and take us in a better direction. This is the definition of a new day dawning and a new era beginning, and it will be filled with justice and it will be filled with change that will really include everyone and respect everyone and an entirely different approach to fighting the coronavirus, which is exactly what we need. So, this day couldn't have come fast enough. It's finally here. We're going to go quickly through a few things today. I'm going to cover some ground quickly, get to questions because we all, I know, want to watch the inauguration ceremony.

So, let me go to the most important topic, which is, of course, vaccinations and how we reach as many people as possible. I got good news and bad news. Normally, I'm the kind of person who likes bad news first, but in this case, I'm going to do the good news first because it's really good news. At some point today, very soon, we will pass half-a-million doses of the vaccine given in New York City since the vaccination effort began. Half-a-million New Yorkers will have today received the vaccination. And that is a sign of things to come. We're working on a goal of one million vaccinations this month. We can do it if we get enough vaccine. Just in the last 24 hours, almost 40,000 vaccinations given. So, the pace is gaining every day. We have a goal of 300,000 vaccinations this week, even more next week, but we need the vaccine to go with it.

Look, on top of all the other challenges we now see a particular problem – the Moderna vaccine, those deliveries have been delayed. So, we already were feeling the stress of a shortage of vaccine. Now the situation has been made even worse. We need to think differently in this moment. Given that the overall supply is not what we need it to be, given that the Moderna deliveries have been delayed, we need to rethink the approach in this moment and be agile and be creative to address the challenge at hand. I've talked a lot about the freedom to vaccinate. The freedom to vaccinate now means being able to use those second doses that are being held in reserve. We need them now. Look, we know a lot of vaccine is being produced all over this country. We are very hopeful additional vaccines are going to come into play soon, but we've got folks right now who need help, who need to be protected.

We need to save lives right now. And even the first dose provides around 50 percent protection from the coronavirus. If you're a senior citizen, if you're someone who's vulnerable, even that first dose means a whole lot to you and it's our job to protect you. So, the way to do that is to free up that supply of second doses, to not hold them in reserve for weeks, not keep them in a

refrigerator, but put them in people's arms. We need the freedom to vaccinate, and that means we need the help of the federal government, of the new administration in Washington, the Biden administration. We need the help of the State. We need everyone to come together and agree, in this shortage dynamic, let's free up those second doses, keep the appointments going that have already been made, help people get that first dose, and then backfill with more supply in the coming days so that we can keep everything moving forward.

What does it mean? Well, right now we've had to reschedule – this week, we've had to tell 23,000 New Yorkers who had an appointment this week that they will not be able to get that appointment for lack of supply. If we had the freedom to vaccinate, if we had those second doses free up, we could reach those 23,000 New Yorkers this week. We've got about 65,000 doses that we could put into play right away if we had that freedom. I think – it's a tough situation for everyone. And I really do appreciate how hard everyone at the federal government, State government's working to try and resolve these very, very tough situations, but let's just acknowledge the shortage we're dealing with and let's be creative and let's do something to reach the most people as quickly as possible. And then, again, catch up in the days ahead. I know the Biden administration is going to intensify production. I have faith that the weeks ahead, we're going to see a whole different level of production of the vaccine happening. So, here's something we could be doing right now to reach more people. And Lord knows we did not want to be canceling more appointments. For folks for this week, we do not want to do that to New Yorkers.

All right, now, as we expand our vaccination effort, obviously everything contingent upon more and more supply being made available, but as I've said, many times, this vaccination effort is going to be focused on equity. And that's why we are focused on neighborhoods hardest hit by COVID, the place where unfortunately the most cases were and the most people died and the most need still exists. One group of folks who absolutely deserves priorities, New Yorkers who live in public housing. Folks in NYCHA developments bore the brunt of the coronavirus crisis. We want to focus on them, and we want to focus, of course, on seniors who live in public housing. So, we're issuing a goal today to vaccinate 50,000 senior citizens who live in public housing in New York City. We believe we can get to that 50,000 goal in the weeks ahead if there's enough vaccine. We know, I'm going to state the obvious, is that every senior who lives in public housing, we know there's still a lot of hesitancy in a lot of communities. We know we're going to have to do a lot of persuading, provide a lot of evidence, answer a lot of questions, show a lot of community leaders who are believers in the vaccine and come forward to show people they believe in it, they know it's safe, they'll take it themselves. Those things will help us over time, but a goal of 50,000 doses, 50,000 residents of public housing, this is the way that we want to start strong to show our commitment to folks who live in NYCHA. So, that effort is underway right now.

We've had sites at public housing developments, three sites over the weekend, really successful at Cassidy Houses on Staten Island, Polo Grounds in Manhattan, and Van Dyke Houses in Brooklyn. Together about 1,600 people were vaccinated. That's a great start. Again, our goal is 50,000 over the next few weeks as soon as we get the kinds of supplies we need. We're going to go out to the developments. But we're also going to help folks – if we can't have a site in a development, we're going to help folks in the development get to a vaccination site nearby. We're

going to be providing transportation for seniors in public housing and seniors all over the city. And we have a variety of ways we'll do it. Our good friends at the Department for the Aging have a senior transport initiative. They'll be a big part of that. We have Taxi and Limousine drivers, TLC drivers, who will be a part of it. Hunter Ambulette will be a part of it. We've got a lot of partners to make sure that seniors who don't have another way to get to a vaccination site have an easy way to get it done. So, in some cases we're going to be going right to the NYCHA developments, and other cases we're going to get the seniors to a nearby clinic and vaccination center. But the bottom line is no one is more needy than our fellow New Yorkers who live in public housing. Those seniors need to be prioritized and we're going to reach 50,000 of them in the coming weeks.

Okay. With that – and again, we're going fast today because the inauguration, let me go through the indicators really quickly. Number one, the daily number of people admitted to New York City hospitals for suspected COVID-19, today's report 284 patients, and the hospitalization rate per 100,000 – 5.08. The daily number of – number two, daily number of COVID cases, seven-day average, 4,692. And the current testing indicator on a seven-day rolling average, 8.53 percent. All too high, but a chance to turn that around now that we have a new administration that we know will speed the supply of vaccine to us. A few words in Spanish.

[Mayor de Blasio speaks in Spanish]

With that, let's turn to our colleagues in the media. Please let me know the name and outlet of each journalist.

**Moderator:** We'll now begin our Q-and-A. As a reminder, we're joined today by Dr. Chokshi, by Dr. Katz, by Department for the Aging Commissioner Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez, and by Senior Advisor Dr. Jay Varma. First question today goes to Juliet from 1010 WINS.

**Question:** And good morning, Mr. Mayor, on this special day.

**Mayor:** That is one way of saying it, Juliet. It's a fantastic day and a happy day for this whole country. How you doing?

**Question:** Yeah, I'm fine. Thank you. So, I wanted to ask you, can you elaborate more on what this delay is for Moderna? Is it the federal shipments or is it just the manufacturer of it? What's going on with it?

**Mayor:** Let me turn to Dr. Chokshi and Dr. Varma, if they want to elaborate on what's going on with Moderna.

**Commissioner Dave Chokshi, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene:** Sure. Thank you, Mr. Mayor. And thanks, Juliet, for the question. Yes, we are disappointed, of course, by the delay in the Moderna vaccine shipments for New York City this week. The information that we have is that Moderna, the manufacturer, they partner with a distributor from the federal government. And it's the distributor that conveyed the delay. We had been expecting to get all of the doses of Moderna for New York City yesterday on Tuesday. And instead, they will be

delivered over the course of today and tomorrow. It's a total of 103,400 doses that are affected. That includes 54,200 first doses and 49,200 second doses. So, that's the information that we have about it. We will receive the supply that was planned for New York City this week. But unfortunately, with that delay.

**Mayor:** Dr. Varma, anything to add?

**Senior Advisor Jay Varma:** Nothing else from me.

**Mayor:** Go ahead, Juliet.

**Question:** Okay. Thank you. So, now you explained before that you have to reschedule appointments, what happens to people's second appointment? Are they just not being made or, you know, where is that?

**Mayor:** I'll start and turn to Dr. Chokshi. Look, Juliet, we, absolutely of course want to make sure folks get that second shot. And a number of people have been given appointments, and we're very hopeful that the supply will keep increasing in the coming days, particularly with the efforts of the new administration in Washington. I think the bottom line here though, is we have a more immediate and profound problem that folks who were expecting their first appointment are now finding it has to be canceled and postponed. That's not acceptable. We've got to find a way to reach those folks. So, you know, for folks who are two weeks, three weeks down the line, supposed to get a second appointment, we're going to be very focused on that. But my concern right now is the folks who were expecting to go in today, tomorrow, and get their shot and now can't, this is why I think we need to really free up the second doses on hand now to serve the folks who are waiting right this moment, just to get some protection. Go ahead, Dr. Chokshi on how we're scheduling second appointments going forward.

**Commissioner Chokshi:** Thank you, Mr. Mayor. Juliet, the first thing I would start with is to make sure we're very clear that anyone who does have a second dose appointment scheduled in the coming days that appointment will remain, meaning that is not being rescheduled. People will get their second doses just as they have made the appointment to do over the next few days. The appointments that are being rescheduled for tomorrow and Friday are all first dose appointments. And they will all be rescheduled within the span of one week. So, those people will be able to get their first doses a few days later than anticipated. And then the final point is just to reiterate what the Mayor has said, which is we can continue to ensure that people get their second doses on the right schedule. For the Pfizer vaccine, that's around 21 days after getting the first dose and for the Moderna vaccine, that's around 28 days after getting the first dose. You know, it's the practice that when you get your first dose of the shot, virtually everyone is getting their second dose appointments scheduled at that same time. So, that can continue forward, and people will continue to get their second doses on schedule. But as the Mayor has said, we have a way to ensure that more people get their first doses sooner with the flexibility that he has described.

**Mayor:** Yeah. And Juliet, just to finish the point. My frustration is a lot of vaccines, 65,000 doses sitting in a refrigerator on an artificial reserve when we need them right now. That's what

I'm trying to solve for, and again, with the help of the federal government, the State government, we can do that. Go ahead.

**Moderator:** The next is Katie from the Wall Street Journal.

**Question:** Hey, good morning, Mayor de Blasio. I have a question. I know Governor Cuomo said at some point that the State will go ahead and try to order the vaccine directly from the manufacturer. I don't know if that's something that the City has considered or looked at, just going, I guess, over the State and just going straight to the manufacturer on these vaccines.

**Mayor:** Look, Katie, we desperately need the vaccine. We're also trying to work really closely with the federal government and State government. So, we'll consider all options, but right now I think the best solution is what I think the Biden administration is absolutely committed to, which is expanding supply using the Defense Production Act. We – you know, I don't think this is about people trying to grab you know, the crumbs off the table here. We need the supply expanded in a huge way, and I really believe that's what the Biden administration will do. Go ahead.

**Question:** Thanks. And my second question is about some of the vaccine centers and the experiences of people who've been getting the vaccines at the City runs sites. I've heard mostly great things, but I've also heard from some people like yesterday, at Canarsie High School, there was a three-hour delay that seemed to be from staffing issues. So, I don't know if you know of the staffing levels, if there's fluctuation, some of these people are volunteers kind of ushering people in and out. Can you speak to any concerns with staffing at these centers? And especially three-hour delay seems pretty unacceptable when you consider the population of people getting the vaccine.

**Mayor:** Oh, absolutely, that's unacceptable. And thank you for the way you started the question, Katie. Overwhelmingly what I've heard from community leaders, elected officials and from my own visits to centers is that things have gone very, very smoothly. And there's tremendous appreciation, particularly from our seniors for the opportunity to get vaccinated, but any time something isn't working right, we need to fix it right away. That kind of delay is unacceptable. And if there was a staffing problem, obviously we can't let that happen again. I don't know that Canarsie site, which of our colleagues' operations was running that whoever's that was, do you want to speak to that?

**Commissioner Chokshi:** Yes sir. That's one of the Health Department sites. And thank you, you know, for raising the question we want to ensure the best experience possible for people who are getting vaccinated. And at the vast majority of our sites you know, that has been the case. I am aware that at a small number of sites yesterday there were longer lines including at Canarsie High School. What we did was we redirected staff from places where we were sufficiently staffed or overstaffed to be able to ensure a smoother flow at those other sites. The most important thing to keep in mind with respect to the staffing is that we have to ensure a sufficient number of the clinical staff on site. That's what helps to ensure a safe vaccination experience and that people are getting the vaccine in the timeframe, you know, that's required. We've also put in place a number of ways to usher to the front of the line, anyone who may be older or disabled to

ensure that when lines do form, although we'll do everything that we can to avoid those lines, when they do form you know, the people who should be inside should sitting down, are given accommodations to do so.

**Mayor:** Go ahead.

**Moderator:** The next is Joe Anuta from Politico.

**Question:** Good morning Mr. Mayor.

**Mayor:** Good morning, Joe, how you doing?

**Question:** Not too bad. I'm just wondering if I could ask you about the Governor's budget presentation yesterday. He presented two scenarios based on varying federal aid. And I'm curious if OMB has crunched the numbers? And if you have a sense of how the State's budget will affect the city? I know there was a lot of uncertainty in your budget as well because we could see a lot of cuts from Albany?

**Mayor:** Yes, we are really concerned about it. And the bottom line is it's absolutely true the State has a massive need and the federal government has to make the State whole. If the State is not whole, that will lead to cuts to New York City and to cities and towns and counties all over New York State. And that's just something that we can't handle now after everything we've been through. So, yeah, the State is in desperate need and needs full relief from the stimulus, needs to be made whole for the revenue they've lost. Go ahead.

**Question:** But do you have any numbers about what the State budget means for the City? Like any cuts that you're already seeing? Because I know that the budget legislation was released pretty late last night. So, I'm curious if you have any –

**Mayor:** Yeah Joe, what we've seen already in this current fiscal year is a huge amount of money withheld by the State by simply not reimbursing us or sending a funding along. That all has to be resolved by the end of their fiscal year on April 1st. So no, we know it's real right now, but what I projected in my budget presentation was you could easily see cuts of \$4 billion or more just from what the State has already talked about in terms of the need to cut localities if they don't get federal relief. So, we talked about the kind of hole we're trying to close for our budget, \$5.25 billion. That's without any of those additional State cuts. We're projecting as much as \$4 billion in additional cuts, additional budget gap if the State does not get relief.

**Moderator:** The next is Nolan Hicks from the Post.

**Question:** Hey, good morning everybody.

**Mayor:** Hey Nolan. How you doing?

**Question:** I'm all right. I was wondering if you could fill in some more the, sort of the blanks on the vaccine situation? Have you guys gotten any indication about why the supplies of vaccine

have not ramped up over the last six weeks? Has [inaudible] that the country simply doesn't have a big enough share of the existing production and the existing production is as high as it can possibly go? Or are there lots of manufacturing hang ups that have slowed down the projected amounts of vaccine that we were supposed to get? Like, why are we getting as much vaccine this week as we got four weeks ago? That doesn't make a lot of sense.

**Mayor:** Yeah, it does not make a lot of sense. Excellent question. I appreciate that question. And I'm going to start with Dr. Varma and then if Dr. Katz or Dr. Chokshi want to jump in. But here's my bottom line. You're exactly right. It should have been constant growth of supply. And from what I can see, it was the failure of the federal government to use the Defense Production Act to truly put the vaccination effort on a wartime footing. We know what a wartime footing looks like. We know how the normal rules of the game get changed in a moment of urgency and lots of manufacturers are brought into play. And there's ways of doing things just totally outside the box. When you're talking about millions of millions of people who need their lives saved. That didn't happen. This is too much business as usual. That's why I'm so appreciative that I'm going to call him President Biden now because it's just a few hours away, that he made so clear the goal of 100 million vaccinations in his first 100 days. That clearly is the kind of goal that animates the action we need on the private sector side as well. Dr. Varma, you want to fill in the blank on what's going on with production as far as you know?

**Senior Advisor Varma:** Yeah. Happy to give as much as I can. I guess just a couple of the really critical points to understand, the first is that we have not had good visibility into this process right now. And so, our hope is really that with the new administration, that we will get a much better understanding of where the production capacity is right now and what it could potentially be. And as the Mayor notes, invoking the Defense Production Act is going to be absolutely critical because these two companies that are authorized right now are both US-based companies. And so therefore in theory you know, should be able to, to ramp up their production specifically for the US population. That's number one. Number two is in vaccine production is unfortunately much, much more complicated than producing a drug. It is an enormously complex process because what you're doing is you're injecting something directly into people. So just the standards for, for sterility and safety has to be very high. So, there may be limitations that we don't know about right now. And again, our hope is that with the administration change, that we're going to be learning a little bit more into what the window is on this. And then I think the third of course is getting back to the Mayor's critical point here about the freedom to vaccinate. We know that public health works most effectively when it is -- has local control and responsive to the needs of that population. And vaccine to date and even allocated by population across the state. And so again, our hope is that as we demonstrate our ability to vaccinate at a very high level, that will also result in us getting a fairer share probably of the vaccine that should be administered.

**Mayor:** Thank you, doctor. Either of the other doctors have anything to add?

**Commissioner Chokshi:** Sir, just to two points to add from my perspective. The first is to say that just as New York City has ramped up our capacity to administer, that has to be met with a ramping up of the supply. This is something that we rely on the federal government and manufacturers to be able to do. But given where we are with this pandemic, it is critically

important for us to be able to match up that capacity with supply because we know it will save lives over the coming weeks. And then the second point is that as the Mayor has said, you know, we are hoping for a real change with respect to the visibility that we have into supply with the change in administration. In particular we have heard different things from the federal government and from the manufacturers, for example, about how many existing vaccine doses are available for shipping today or next week. And so, we are hoping in the next day or two to get more clarity from the federal government to be able to better plan for the supply that we can expect for New York City, not just next week but over the next month as well.

**Mayor:** Got it. Thank you. Go ahead Nolan.

**Question:** I guess I have, I have a two-part follow-up to sort of follow the two threads laid out by the doctors. Firstly, has anyone from the incoming administration or the outgoing administration provided any sort of explanation about what invoking the Defense Production Act would fix? Is there a shortage of needles, shortage of vials? What sort of pieces of the mass manufacturing piece of this do they hope to accelerate with that? And the second piece is I guess you know, you're talking about the freedom to vaccinate and moving the second doses into the first dose class. Don't you run the risk of not having second doses ready at the time if the supply chain isn't sorted in three or four weeks?

**Mayor:** On the second point, it's a very fair concern. I think it's crucial to understand, I'll let Dr Varma speak to this to both points. That the second dose we want to get as close to that assigned day as possible, but we do have some flexibility just in medical terms. But I think the most obvious answer on that point Nolan is we've got something right in front of us today. You know, the fact that we're going to have to cancel tens of thousands of appointments today, for folks who need a first dose, that's something we should avoid at all costs when we have 65,000 doses sitting on the shelf. My belief is that especially with the new administration and you're going to see some speeding up of supply. If it turns out that's going to take longer, we'll make adjustments. But what I can't make sense of is why we would have a huge supply just sitting there and folks unable to get even a first appointment. On the question of Defense Production Act, we have seen even in the midst of the last year, how the Defense Production Act really does change the speed of manufacturing of all sorts of things if it's fully invoked. Dr. Varma, will you speak to that as best you've heard from your colleagues in the Biden world? And a quick point on the second dose and the amount of flexibility about the exact day that folks get that?

**Senior Advisor Varma:** Yeah, so first on the topic of the Defense Production Act I will confess that I do not know every single step of the way in the production of each of these vaccines. These are incredibly complex manufacturing processes. But what I do know is that what the Defense Production Act allows you to do is to understand every single place along that supply chain that might be delaying things. And it can be quite remarkable when you look at the you know, look at the supply chains extensively, say for diagnostics. And even very, you know minor components that you wouldn't think should hold up the process can delay the process. So I think what we're really hoping for is by having a stronger federal control and insight into that process, that we can understand exactly where those delays are. And there will actually be more steps taken to address each of those. As it relates to the second dose, again the issue here is the ability to be flexible when necessary. All of us as physicians absolutely want to make sure that people get their

second dose and they get that second dose according to the protocol that was studied. And the reason that's so important is we know that you only get full protection against this virus after you've gotten that second dose. And again, after about seven day to 10 days after that second dose. So that's the ideal scenario. But at the same time, we also know that there is benefit from even getting a single dose and that flexibility has to be available to us at the local level, to be able to make sure that we maximize the benefit for the maximum number of people. And so that may mean in some situations, allowing us like window period, which you get the vaccine. We know that window period is acceptable for two reasons. One, it was included in part of the protocols. In some of the protocols, they allowed a valid dose to be given up to seven days or even several weeks longer. And we know this from other vaccines as well, too. The delay is not good in terms of, you know, leaving you susceptible to less protection, but in terms of your long-term outcome, long-term protection, and a delay of additional week is not going to change your protection over the long-term. Vaccine remains effective after you get that second dose, even if it's delayed.

**Mayor:** Thank you very much. Go ahead.

**Moderator:** The next is Kristen Dalton from the Staten Island Advance.

**Question:** Good morning, Mr. Mayor. How are you?

**Mayor:** Good, Kristen. How have you been?

**Question:** I'm good. Thanks. Just have wanted to build off of Katie's question earlier, regarding the long wait times. Hearing two, three hour waits at Port Richmond High School and Staten Island Tech over the last day, I know the doctor said that you guys might be redirecting staff, but is there any plan to just increase the number of staff that are administering the vaccines?

**Mayor:** It's a great question. I appreciate it. And, again, I'm always thankful – I'll say thank you to you, Kristen, and also the Katie – when anyone tells us where there's a specific problem, a lot of times, obviously, our colleagues know about it and they're acting on it, but whenever the media raises a specific problem point, it helps us to pinpoint something we need to do better. I want to – as I turned to Dr. Chokshi for the answer on the Staten Island sites, I want to say, there's a difference between a wait that someone had their assigned time for their appointment, and they didn't get it at that time, and it was by the time they got their shot an hour later, or two hours later – we never want to see that – versus people got there early and there was a long line of folks waiting for their specific time. And a lot of folks are, of course, choosing to get there early to make sure that they have their place. We don't want to see lines. We want to see people stick to their appointed time, not just show up. But I do think some of the lines we're seeing are people just being extra cautious. So, Dr. Chokshi, to the specific situation on the Staten Island sites. And if we need additional staffing, Kristen, we absolutely can send more staffing to any site that needs it. That's absolutely the case. We just need to know the ones that need that reinforcement. Go ahead, Dr. Chokshi.

**Commissioner Chokshi:** Yes, sir. Thank you very much. And thanks for this question. We've had over 60,000 people vaccinated just in the last few days across the 15 vaccine hubs – the City

vaccine hubs that the Mayor has mentioned. Two of those are on Staten Island at the two sites that you mentioned. And we do know that, you know, so many thousands of people have gotten their first dose of vaccine there already. With respect to the lines – yes, as mentioned earlier, we are redirecting some staff to those sites, but we're also ensuring that we are pulling on all of the staff who are trained to be able to vaccinate people and getting them to the sites where we know that they're needed, including at those two Staten Island sites. So, that's not just nurses, but also pharmacists, EMT's, other people who are trained as vaccinators and pulling from a number of different sources to ensure that we have enough staff to be able to do that part of the process. One other contributor that I'll mention that we do actively work on as well is, is ensuring that the eligibility verification process is as smooth as possible. There are, you know, several requirements, including State requirements that we do have to check and confirm to make sure that that people do meet the eligibility requirements. And we've already put in place a number of improvements in the process to try to streamline that and make it as quick as possible. And the final thing to say is just that we are committed to ensuring that people have as good an experience as possible. I visited several of the hubs myself, and it's so heartening to see that the vast majority of people are having a great experience and we'll keep working on the operations here to improve with every passing day.

**Mayor:** Okay, Kristen, you've got to follow up, and then, I just got a note that the inauguration ceremonies are beginning, so we'll take one more after Kristin, just cut a little short today in light of the inauguration. Go ahead, Kristen.

**Question:** Sure, and how is the shipment delay impacting sites opening? You had said earlier that the Empire Outlets mass site was supposed to open this week. And then I noticed yesterday, it said this month it was supposed to open. Is that the reason for the delay in opening? And do you know when Empire Outlets will open 24/7?

**Mayor:** Kristen, we are definitely facing a challenge right now. We've got a lot of big sites ready to go and we want to provide 24/7 options to more and more people, but exactly as that was raining to hit its stride, we're having a massive supply problem. Again, I want to emphasize the numbers – last week, 220,000 plus doses given in New York City. This week's goal, 300,000. Next week, we're going to go beyond that if there's supply. So, this effort's been growing, growing, growing, and right as we're getting to that point we have a supply breakdown. So, I'll turn to my colleagues on the exact timing of Empire Outlet, which of the doctors wants to speak to that? Who's got it guys? All right. I'm not getting an answer – Dr. Chokshi, you got that one?

**Commissioner Chokshi:** Sir, my understanding for Empire Outlet is that it could get stood up as soon as next week, but it is contingent on sufficient supply as you've mentioned.

**Mayor:** Okay. So, Kristen, we'll get you the exact day. Hopefully, starting as early as today. And tomorrow, next day, we're going to get a whole clearer picture from the Biden administration of what kind of supply they'll be able to move and that will obviously allow us to finalize the plans for the next bigger sites.

**Moderator:** Last question for today, it goes to Henry from Bloomberg.

**Question:** Hello, Mr. Mayor. How are you doing? I guess you're pretty happy today.

**Mayor:** I'm a very, very happy person, Henry. How are you?

**Question:** I'm good. I'm good. Let me ask you this very specifically, the City website says the city has 940,825 shots, and that you've administered about 494,596 shots. Now, there are only 115,000 nursing home beds across New York State, and I believe you said that you strip out those numbers anyway in reporting how many shots you've given. So, where are these missing vaccinations? Why is there so many vaccinations that apparently haven't been given?

**Mayor:** I'll let Dr. Chokshi and our other colleagues speak to that, but I think the central point is – no, I want to be clear, the numbers that are devoted to the nursing homes, that is a separate stream that we don't directly administer. So, it does count as doses for people in New York City, but it's not part of the set that we administer. We do show it as doses available for New York City. And that effort needs to keep moving and moving fast, obviously. But, remember, that we did 220,000 doses last week – goal is 300,000 doses this week, then separate all of the pieces going to the nursing homes and you see very quickly that number is – and very, very quickly that number dissipates. But I do understand why there's some confusion when you look at that. Dr. Chokshi, can you help Henry square that?

**Commissioner Chokshi:** Yes, sir. I certainly can. And, Henry, our team will follow up with you on the precise counting here, but let me give you the top lines. First, the number of first doses that are remaining for New York City at this moment that have actually been physically delivered or will be over the course of today, and tomorrow is about 140,000 doses. And so, that's how you can see we're going to very rapidly work through that supply, which is a good thing. It means more New Yorkers will get vaccinated with their first dose, but we don't have enough for the pace that we are able to maintain and that we hope to maintain. Beyond that, there are about 250,000 doses that have been delivered to New York City, but they are marked as second doses, and so can only be used as second doses, according to that timeframe that's been described. And then the final point is to just clarify that, that total number of doses delivered, over 900,000, that does include the doses that are delivered to New York City for administration through the nursing home program. So, those doses are not available for New York City providers to administer, but since they're going to New York City residents, we do include it in that total number of doses delivered. So, I know the numbers are a bit complicated, but we can follow up with a precise accounting. The bottom line is that we have too little supply to be able to meet the demand that we want to for New York City.

**Mayor:** Thank you, doctor. Go ahead, Henry.

**Question:** All right. Thank you for that. My second question has to do with the delay in the Moderna vaccine deliveries. How were you informed about this and what is the reason for the delay? Does it have to do with side effects that have been found with the vaccine? Why is there a delay in the supply and how were you informed that there's a delay in the supply?

**Mayor:** I'm going to Dr. Varma, and if Dr. Choksi or Dr. Katz want to add, feel free. Go ahead, Dr. Varma.

**Senior Advisor Varma:** Yeah, actually I'll pass it to Dave, because I had not heard about the delay being related to allergic reactions. I know there was a concern about a single lot in California, but that has not affected our supply specifically. Dave, do you have other updates?

**Commissioner Chokshi:** Yes. I'm happy to clarify. So, first, let me start with clarifying the facts. The delay had nothing to do with that the lot in California that was associated with some of the reactions that Dr. Varma described, and, you know, it didn't have to do with anything else with respect to the quality of the vaccine. We were informed about it by the federal government, our partners at the CDC who we're in touch with multiple times a day, you know, with respect to understanding shipments and deliveries and exactly when we should expect them in New York City. So, that notification occurred, you know, according to the normal process that we have for that. Our best understanding is that this was purely a shipment issue. You know, whether it was a logistical challenge of making sure there was enough packing material or dry ice for the shipment, we don't have those details, but it appears that it was a logistical issue from the distributor of the vaccine that the federal government partners with. So, again, just to summarize it all in a bottom line, we expect that those vaccines are intact, they will be safe and effective as with all Moderna vaccines, and we'll get them for New York City over the course of today and tomorrow.

**Mayor:** Thank you very much, Dr. Chokshi. And, look, that last point as I wrap up here, everyone, and we all now get to watch an amazing historical moment with this inauguration – that last point is crucial, it gets back to what Dr. Varma was saying about the supply chain and the Defense Production Act, that it could be the dry ice, it could be the packing material, it could be the shipping, there are so many factors that could lead to delays. All of that has to be made much more coherent and that means strong federal control of the process that can only be achieved with real leadership in Washington and the use of Defense Production Act. I know, I feel in my bones that Joe Biden and Kamala Harris and their team is going to take over this situation aggressively and make sense of this and increase our supply and give us a lot more clarity, and that's going to start literally over the next few days.

So, today, is a joyous day, because New Yorkers are going to be safer now, we're going to get a lot more help from the federal government now, we're going to get a lot more compassion and kindness and decency from the President of the United States. There's going to be a lot more hope. And when I think about that, that makes me feel really positive about this city and this country. I think we have a chance to regain a sense of common purpose and unity, that's really what we need at this moment in history. And Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are going to help us bring back that true American sense of us all being in this together. So, get ready for a great day, everybody. Thank you.

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