



Contact: Roberto A. Jackson  
Acting Director  
Communications & Public Affairs Office  
P: 520-562-9715  
C: 520-610-1654  
[Roberto.jackson@gric.nsn.us](mailto:Roberto.jackson@gric.nsn.us)

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## For Immediate Release

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### **GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY SUSPENDS USE OF JOHNSON & JOHNSON VACCINE PENDING CDC INVESTIGATION**

SACATON, AZ – Today, Governor Stephen Roe Lewis, acting in consultation with the Gila River Indian Community's Council, suspended the use of Johnson & Johnson vaccines in the Community based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and the Indian Health Service to pause administration of this vaccine following reports from six individuals in the United States who experienced rare adverse effects from the vaccine. Please note that none of the reports originated from vaccines given in the Community and those six cases are out of 6.8 million total Johnson & Johnson vaccines administered across the United States.

Although no cases of adverse reactions have been reported within the Gila River Indian Community, and the likelihood of the rare adverse reaction to the Johnson & Johnson is extremely low at 0.000088%, Governor Lewis made this determination out of an abundance of caution. Governor Lewis stated, "the health and safety of the entire Community has been the top priority in every decision we have made during the pandemic. This situation is no different."

The CDC will convene a meeting of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices to review the 6 reported cases in the United States of a rare type of blood clot that developed within two weeks of the vaccine being administered. Governor Lewis also instructed Gila River Health Care to evaluate its post-vaccination protocols to ensure follow-up is conducted with any members of the Community who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

Following the CDC investigation and reported findings, Governor Lewis will work with the Health and Social Standing Committee and Community Council to determine when, and whether, to resume administering that particular vaccine.

Governor Lewis stressed that, "the Community's vaccine program will continue with the supply of Pfizer and Moderna vaccines that are available in the Community as both of those vaccines have proven highly effective in combatting the COVID-19 virus and the UK variant, which is now the dominant strain of COVID in the United States. We will resume use of the J&J vaccine if and when we determine that it is in the best interests of the health and safety of our members."

For questions, please contact Tribal Health Department at (520)562-5100 or visit [GRHC.ORG/JJVAX](https://grhc.org/jjvax).

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*Gila River Indian Community, located on 372,000 acres in south-central Arizona and home to the indigenous people of O'odham (Pima) and Pee Posh (Maricopa). The people are known for their farms, deep traditions, basket weaving and pottery. The Tribe is comprised of seven districts, the administrative offices and departments are located in Sacaton, and serve the people throughout these seven community districts. 100% of its profits from gaming and 17 other Enterprises are utilized by the community providing services and opportunities to achieve the highest quality of life.*

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