



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Grand Rapids COVID-19 vaccination clinic for area restaurant, retail and hospitality workers offers free \$50 Visa gift card to first 200 walk-ups**

*Event continues statewide “shots in arms” campaign partnership sponsored by Small Business Association of Michigan, Michigan Restaurant & Lodging Association, Protect Michigan Commission and local partners including Kent County Health Dept., Suburban Inns*

**Grand Rapids, Mich.** – The first 200 restaurant, hospitality and retail workers from the Greater Grand Rapids-area who get a COVID-19 vaccination from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., Wednesday, June 9, at the **Hilton Garden Inn**, 2321 East Beltline, will receive a free \$50 Visa gift card.

Wednesday’s event is part of a statewide “shots in arms” campaign by leaders of Gov. Whitmer’s **Protect Michigan Commission**, the **Small Business Association of Michigan** (SBAM) and the **Michigan Restaurant & Lodging Association** (MRLA).

Local sponsors who are partnering with those statewide organizations to promote Wednesday’s vaccination clinic include the **Kent County Health Department**, **Hilton Garden Inn** and **Suburban Inns**.

“It makes sense for Suburban Inns to host this clinic, since our industry is still suffering and our colleagues and small business owners need all the help they can get,” said **Peter D. Beukema**, CEO of Suburban Inns.

“By hosting this clinic, we can help to assure our guests that our industry is vaccinated, which will help demonstrate safety for both our team members and our guests,” Beukema said. “It’s all a positive step to welcome more guests to stay, meet, and dine with us again.”

Funds to purchase the gift cards were privately donated and do not come from taxpayer resources.

“We recognize how hard Michigan’s hospitality, retail and restaurants have been impacted by COVID and how hard they’ve worked to keep us protected,” said Protect Michigan Commission Director **Kerry Ebersole Singh**. “This ‘shots in arms’ partnership thanks these essential workers for their dedication and ensures their protection through the safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine.”

Key details to know about Monday’s COVID-19 vaccination clinic in Grand Rapids include:

- **No appointment needed.**

- Walk-ins by individuals and families are welcome to get vaccinated, regardless of where they work. No one will be turned away from getting a shot if they request one.
- **Johnson & Johnson and Pfizer shots are available.**
- **The first 200 will receive a \$50 Visa gift card.**
- **Proof of health insurance is not required.**
- **A parent or guardian must be present** for ages 18 and under.
- The vaccines will be administered by the **Kent County Health Department.**

“Safe and effective vaccines are our surest and most permanent pathway out of this pandemic,” said **Brian Calley**, president of Small Business Association of Michigan. “Business owners have done their part to keep customers and employees safe. This vaccine clinic is another example of how industry is going the extra mile build a better and more certain future.”

Gov. Whitmer created the [Protect Michigan Commission](#) in January. The appointees represent a diverse array of industries, professions and backgrounds. Housed within the MDHHS, commission leaders are charged with helping to ensure every Michigander has a plan to get vaccinated against COVID-19. Housed within the **Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS)**, they are charged with helping to ensure every Michigander has a plan to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

“The Kent County Health Department is thrilled to partner with the Protect Michigan Commission, SBAM and the Michigan Restaurant & Lodging Association to vaccinate hospitality workers with the COVID-19 vaccine,” said **Mary Wisinski**, immunization program supervisor at the Kent County Health department.

“This partnership offers an opportunity for workers to protect themselves, their friends and families, and the patrons they serve,” Wisinski said. “I believe it also brings peace of mind as we continue to re-open our community and our businesses.”

The Protect Michigan Commission is partnering with the MRLA, SBAM and community organizations throughout the state to encourage Michiganders working in the hospitality, retail and restaurant industry to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

“This partnership with the Protect Michigan Commission provides a pathway to conveniently get vaccines to restaurant and hotel employees and their families,” said **Justin Winslow**, MRLA President & CEO.

“For hospitality workers that means greater peace of mind and no more masks to hide our smile, which is kind of a big deal in this industry. Join us in Traverse City on Monday for a no-fuss, walk-up clinic designed specifically for the hospitality industry as we approach the busiest season of the year,” Winslow said.

The Grand Rapids event is the fifth in a series of vaccination clinics the respective organizations are hosting in communities across the state with high foot-traffic and a concentration of restaurants, bars and hotels. The next upcoming clinic that will focus on providing free COVID-19 vaccinations to retail, restaurant and hospitality workers and their families is scheduled for **Tuesday, June 15, from 3-6 p.m. at the Radisson Plaza Hotel, 100 W. Michigan, in Kalamazoo.**

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