



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Thursday, June 3, 2021

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

*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 Grand Traverse County Health Dept., Traverse City DDA*

**Traverse City, Mich.** – The first 200 restaurant, hospitality and retail workers from the Grand Traverse-area who get a COVID-19 vaccination from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., Monday, June 7, at the **Rare Bird Brewpub**, 229 Lake Ave. in Traverse City will receive a free \$50 Visa gift card.

Monday’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 Monday’s vaccination clinic include the **Traverse City Downtown Development Authority**, **Traverse City Tourism**, **National Cherry Festival**, Rare Bird Brewpub and the **Grand Traverse County Health Department**.

“We are looking forward to having a thriving, safe, and enjoyable summer in Downtown Traverse City,” said Traverse City Downtown Development Authority CEO **Jean Derenzy**. “We are excited to be a part of this partnership bringing easily accessible vaccines to our community. Vaccination events such as this one at Rare Bird help in assuring our downtown workforce that we are here to assist in keeping the community healthy.”

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 Traverse City 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 **Grand Traverse County Health Department.**

"Workers in the retail, restaurant and hospitality service industries who get vaccinated not only protect themselves but also their friends, families and customers," said **Tina Schuett**, co-owner of Rare Bird with Traverse City native **Nate Crane**.

"We are proud to offer our space at the brewpub for this upcoming vaccine clinic because getting everyone vaccinated makes it safe to return to shopping, dining and relaxing in our communities once again," Schuett said. "The restaurant and hospitality industry have provided essential services to our community during this pandemic and we are honored to play a small part in connecting them with life-saving vaccines so that we can move forward and find our way back to normal."

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.

"Grand Traverse County Health Department has been fortunate to work alongside such amazing community partners through the course of our COVID-19 vaccination distribution efforts," said Grand Traverse County Health Department Public Health Administrator **Michael Lahey**.

"Community-based clinics such as these are key to now ensuring all individuals who wish to be vaccinated have direct access with no barriers or challenges," Lahey said. "We are grateful to those who came to our mass clinics and did their part to be vaccinated and now we must ensure we bring vaccines to those who were unable to travel to one of our sites or just now feel comfortable and are ready to be vaccinated."

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 Traverse City event is the fourth 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. Upcoming clinics that will focus on providing free COVID-19 vaccinations to retail, restaurant and hospitality workers and their families are scheduled for **Wednesday, June 9, from 3-7 p.m. at the Hilton Garden Inn, 2321 East Beltline in Grand Rapids** and **Tuesday, June 15, from 3-6 p.m. at the Radisson Plaza Hotel, 100 W. Michigan, in Kalamazoo.**

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