



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 20, 2020

Contact: Office of Communications (614) 644-8562

ODH Suspends Provider after COVID-19 Vaccines Found Unusable

890 Moderna vaccines wasted after not being properly stored

COLUMBUS – The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) took immediate action after it learned about a vaccine provider potentially mishandling 890 doses of Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, requesting the Ohio State Board of Pharmacy open an investigation.

SpecialtyRX, a vaccine provider in Columbus that is not part of the federal Long-Term Care Pharmacy Partnership program, was given 1,500 vaccines to vaccinate residents at eight long-term care facilities before the new year. After administering the first doses, SpecialtyRX had 890 doses remaining. The company was exploring a transfer of the doses to another provider when it was discovered that they had failed to appropriately monitor temperatures in their refrigerator and freezer. ODH requires all COVID-19 vaccine providers to check and record the minimum and maximum temperatures of cold storage refrigerators and/or freezers each workday.

ODH immunization Program launched an investigative process upon learning of the failure of temperature monitoring and determined that the 890 doses were not viable.

The first doses of the Moderna vaccine that were administered to the residents and staff of the long-term care facilities were viable. For the second dose, the long term care facilities will have to coordinate with another provider which will likely be the local health department.

ODH has immediately halted any future allocations to Specialty RX, and the provider has been instructed to not administer or transfer any of the affected doses and to keep them quarantined in both units until next steps are given.

###