



MASSACHUSETTS COVID-19 VACCINE PROGRAM

BULLETIN

What Massachusetts COVID-19 Vaccine Providers Need to Know Week of 8/19/21

Latest Numbers

- As of 8/19, 4,438,499 people in Massachusetts have been fully vaccinated.

Who to Vaccinate this Week

- **New** Effective 8/13/21, CDC recommends that people who are moderately to severely immunocompromised receive an additional dose of an mRNA COVID-19 Vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna) at least 28 days after the completion of the initial mRNA COVID-19 vaccine series.
- Anyone age 12 and older who lives, works, or studies in Massachusetts is eligible for a vaccine. Health care providers can also vaccinate their patient panels regardless of place of residency.

What to Know this Week

- **New FDA Authorizes Additional Vaccine Dose for Certain Immunocompromised People:** On 8/12/21, the [FDA amended the emergency use authorizations \(EUAs\)](#) for both the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine and the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine to allow for the use of an additional dose in certain immunocompromised individuals, specifically, solid organ transplant recipients or those who are diagnosed with conditions that are considered to have an equivalent level of immunocompromise. Other fully vaccinated individuals do not need an additional vaccine dose right now.
 - Updated EUA factsheets
 - Pfizer EUA fact sheets for [providers](#) and [recipients](#)
 - Moderna EUA fact sheets for [providers](#) and [recipients](#)
 - New section in the [CDC Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Authorized in the United States](#). The clinical considerations for use of an additional dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine apply only to people who are moderately or severely immunocompromised.
 - For providers: [Talking with Patients Who Are Immunocompromised](#)
 - For the public: [COVID-19 Vaccines for Moderately to Severely Immunocompromised People](#)
- **New Recommendations For People Who Are Pregnant, Lactating, or Trying to Get Pregnant:** On 8/11/21, CDC updated its [Interim Clinical Considerations](#) to recommend COVID-19 vaccination for people who are pregnant, lactating, trying to get pregnant now, or might become pregnant in the future and shared [key messages and talking points](#).
 - The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) also issued an [updated practice advisory](#) on COVID-19 vaccination. The advisory summarizes the latest COVID-

19 vaccine safety data in pregnancy and states unequivocally that all eligible people, including pregnant and lactating individuals, should receive COVID-19 vaccination.

- **New *Additional Updates to CDC Clinical Considerations***: In addition to changes described above, the [CDC Interim Clinical Considerations](#) also include updated information on the following topics:
 - People with a history of [Guillain-Barre syndrome](#)
 - Updated information on vaccine administration [errors and deviations](#) in Appendix A (Table).
- **New *Updated COVID-19 Pre vaccination Screening Form & Quick Reference Guide for Healthcare Professionals***:
 - [COVID-19 Pre vaccination Screening form](#) (updated 8/9/21)
 - [COVID-19 Vaccine Quick Reference Guide for Healthcare Professionals](#) (updated 7/27/21)
- **New *MassHealth Coverage for Services Related to COVID-19 Vaccine Counseling***: Effective for dates of service on or after 7/26/21, MassHealth will reimburse physicians and acute outpatient hospitals for providing clinically appropriate, medically necessary COVID-19 counseling services. Learn more in the [MassHealth All Provider Bulletin](#).
- **New *Transporting COVID-19 Vaccines***: DPH recommends using the [CDC - Packing Vaccines for Transport during Emergencies](#) guide when transporting vaccines. Sites must have on hand or have ready access to the following supplies needed for transport:
 - Portable vaccine refrigerator/freezer unit that does not rely on a power source **OR**
 - Qualified containers and packouts which include hard-sided insulated containers or Styrofoam™
 - Conditioned frozen water bottles
 - Insulating materials such as bubble wrap and corrugated cardboard—enough to form two layers per container
 - Temperature monitoring device/digital data logger for each container
- ***Ordering COVID-19 Vaccine***: DPH is no longer limiting which sites can order COVID-19 vaccines. Any provider who would like to order COVID-19 vaccine must be registered with the Massachusetts Immunization Information System (MIIS) and have a completed Massachusetts COVID-19 Vaccine Program (MCVP) agreement. All providers receiving COVID-19 vaccine will order vaccine directly from the MIIS and comply with MCVP guidelines and the following requirements:
 - Report doses administered to the MIIS within 24hrs of administration
 - Administer all doses within 30 days of receipt
 - Order minimum quantities of COVID-19 vaccines (Note new lower ordering limits: 60 doses of Pfizer, 50 doses of Moderna, 25 doses of Johnson & Johnson)
 - Agree to [allowable vaccine wastage guidelines](#).

The Vaccine Unit will work with another site to transfer the doses instead of having that order fulfilled from the manufacturer/distributor. Only order doses that you will use within 30 days. Due to this change, it may take up to 2 to 3 business day before you get confirmation from the Vaccine Unit that the order is being fulfilled. If you have any questions about COVID-19 vaccine ordering please contact DPH-Vaccine-Management@massmail.state.ma.us

- ***DPH COVID-19 Vaccine Website for Providers***: DPH has a [COVID-19 vaccine website for providers](#). Here you will find information about storage and handling, detailed guidance for healthcare providers and organizations, answers to frequently asked questions by providers, links

to CDC and FDA resources, and other relevant information about vaccination efforts. DPH recommends checking the website frequently to stay up to date with the latest information.

- **Expiration Extension for Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine:** The FDA [authorized an extension](#) of the shelf life for the Janssen (J&J) COVID-19 vaccine from 4.5 months to 6 months (an additional 45 days). The decision is based on data from ongoing stability assessment studies, which have demonstrated that the vaccine is stable at 6 months when refrigerated at temperatures of 36 – 46 degrees Fahrenheit (2 – 8 degrees Celsius).
 - Visit <https://vaxcheck.inj/> to confirm the latest expiration dates of vaccine, including those currently available for administration throughout the U.S. This extension applies to refrigerated vials of Janssen (J&J) COVID-19 vaccine that have been held in accordance with the manufacturer’s storage conditions.
 - COVID-19 vaccines that are authorized under an EUA do not have fixed expiration dates, and their expiration dates can be extended as we get more stability data. Always be sure to check the manufacturers’ websites to obtain the most up-to-date expiration dates for COVID-19 vaccines you have on hand.
 - Inventories in the MIIS have been updated with the new expiration dates.

Resources & Learning Opportunities

- **New** COVID-19 vaccine flyers and EUA factsheets are available in [26 different languages](#).
- **New** CDC’s primary publication for disseminating the science it produces is the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, better known as MMWR. The staff at MMWR have launched a new [landing page](#) to help people find the latest information on COVID-19 vaccine effectiveness and safety.
- **New** CDC MMWRs
 - 8/13/2021 [Use of COVID-19 Vaccines After Reports of Adverse Events Among Adult Recipients of Janssen \(Johnson & Johnson\) and mRNA COVID-19 Vaccines \(Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna\): Update from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices — United States, July 2021](#)
 - 8/13/2021 [Reduced Risk of Reinfection with SARS-CoV-2 After COVID-19 Vaccination — Kentucky, May–June 2021](#)
 - 8/13/2021 [Rapid Increase in Circulation of the SARS-CoV-2 B.1.617.2 \(Delta\) Variant — Mesa County, Colorado, April–June 2021](#)
 - 8/13/2021 [Effectiveness of COVID-19 Vaccines in Preventing Hospitalization Among Adults Aged ≥65 Years — COVID-NET, 13 States, February–April 2021](#)
 - 8/6/21 [COVID-19 Vaccine Safety in Adolescents Aged 12–17 Years — United States, December 14, 2020–July 16, 2021](#)
 - 8/6/21 [Outbreak of SARS-CoV-2 Infections, Including COVID-19 Vaccine Breakthrough Infections, Associated with Large Public Gatherings — Barnstable County, Massachusetts, July 2021](#)
- MDPH Immunization Division is pleased to present [free accredited COVID-19 Vaccine content](#). These training sessions are designed for health care providers, vaccine coordinators, and all health care personnel who handle and/or administer COVID-19 vaccines.