



MASSACHUSETTS COVID-19 VACCINE PROGRAM

BULLETIN

What Massachusetts COVID-19 Vaccine Providers Need to Know Week of 3/29/21

New Important note about the Bulletin

In addition to providers currently receiving vaccine, the distribution list for this weekly COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Bulletin also includes providers and others who may not yet be receiving vaccine at this time. We are sending this Bulletin for the awareness for all.

Latest Numbers

- As of 3/28, 3,768,860 doses of COVID-19 vaccine have shipped to Massachusetts, and 3,369,521 doses (89.4%) have been administered.

Who to Vaccinate this Week

- Governor Baker has announced the dates that all remaining individuals and certain worker groups will be eligible for a vaccine.
 - March 22: Individuals 60+ and [certain workers](#)
 - April 5: Individuals 55+ and individuals with one [certain medical condition](#)
 - April 19: General public ages 16 years of age and older
- Provider sites may request vaccine for health care workers, first responders, congregate care settings, home-based health care workers, those 60 years of age or older, those with 2+ [certain medical conditions](#), those residing in low-income and affordable senior housing, childcare workers, K-12 educators and staff, and [certain workers](#).
- Sites should maintain wait lists of eligible individuals they can call if they have extra vaccine they can administer by the end of the day to prevent wastage. Last-minute available appointments are not to be posted on social media. Individuals must be contacted by telephone.

What to Know this Week

- **New Encouraging individuals to receive the first COVID-19 vaccine available to them:** After reviewing the clinical trial data for all three COVID-19 vaccines with Emergency Use Authorization, neither the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) nor the [Massachusetts COVID-19 Vaccine Safety and Efficacy Evaluation Task Force](#) state a product preference. The only exceptions to this are:
 - People with a contraindication to mRNA COVID-19 vaccines (including known Polyethylene glycol [PEG] allergy): consideration may be given to vaccination with Janssen COVID-19 vaccine.
 - People with a contraindication to Janssen COVID-19 vaccine (including known polysorbate allergy): consideration may be given to mRNA COVID-19 vaccination.

Use the CDC Pre-vaccination Checklist [screening form](#) to assess for contraindications and precautions to all three currently authorized COVID-19 vaccines. For people with a history of

immediate reaction to any other vaccine or injectable therapy, consider a referral to an allergist-immunologist to help the patient balance the risks against the benefits of vaccination.

For more information on contraindications and precautions to COVID-19 vaccines, see [CDC Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines](#).

- **New *Using correct needle size***: It is important to use the correct needle size when administering intramuscular (IM) injections. The needle should be long enough to reach the muscle mass and prevent vaccine from seeping into subcutaneous tissue, which may result in a less than optimal immune response. A [Needle Gauge and Length Chart](#) is included in every COVID-19 vaccine ancillary kit. Administering COVID-19 vaccine subcutaneously, rather than intramuscularly, is considered an administration error and should be reported to [VAERS](#).
- **New *Reminder about v-safe After Vaccination Health Tracker***: It is a requirement of the Emergency Use Authorizations for the COVID-19 vaccines that providers give all vaccine recipients information and encourage them to enroll in v-safe, a smartphone-based tool that uses text messaging and web surveys to provide personalized health check-ins after COVID-19 vaccination. Through v-safe, vaccine recipients report side effects to CDC and receive reminders about their second COVID-19 vaccine dose if they need one. Visit [V-safe After Vaccination Health Checker | CDC](#) for more information and fact sheets for vaccine recipients.
- **New *v-safe COVID-19 Vaccine Pregnancy Registry***: There is currently no evidence that COVID-19 vaccination causes any problem with pregnancy. However, data are limited about the safety of COVID-19 vaccines for people who are pregnant. CDC established the [v-safe COVID-19 Vaccine Pregnancy Registry](#) to collect health information from people who received COVID-19 vaccination in the periconception period or during pregnancy to learn more about this issue.
- **New *Guidance for completing the weekly MCVP survey***: The [MCVP survey guide](#) is a new resource intended to assist vaccine administrators and their partners with successfully completing the weekly MCVP survey for requesting vaccine.
- **New *Mobile vaccination funding opportunity*** Interested providers may submit a bid to the open [RFR #180327 Medical Services Provided by Organizations](#) to be considered for mobile vaccination funding by DPH. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. **Please note:** Given the highly constrained vaccine supply environment across the state, we are currently unable to support additional vaccine allocation for mobile vaccinations.
- ***COVID-19 Vaccine Guidance for MCVP Providers*** This [updated guidance](#) provides information on becoming a COVID-19 vaccine provider, information about each COVID-19 vaccine product, requesting vaccine and reporting to the Massachusetts Immunization Information System (MIIS), storage and handling, and clinical considerations.
- ***Guidelines to avoid having to cancel scheduled COVID-19 vaccination appointments:***
 - If your vaccine allocation is less than the total you requested for 1st and 2nd doses, use the vaccine received to first meet all your 2nd dose commitments. After meeting your 2nd dose commitments, any remaining vaccine may be used for first doses.
 - Do not schedule appointments for 1st doses until you have received confirmation of the number of doses you have been allocated and you know that all your 2nd dose commitments will be met.
 - Timing of vaccine shipments can vary. Only schedule appointments for Monday – Wednesday for administration of vaccine you already have in inventory.
 - Use this guidance for ordering and scheduling 2nd doses: [Timeline for requesting second doses PDF](#) | [Doc](#) | [Second Dose Calculator](#). 2nd doses must be requested through the weekly MCVP survey.

- Please also review [this document](#) for key messages about scheduling 2nd doses of Pfizer and Moderna. Every effort should be made to schedule 2nd dose appointments at the time of the 1st appointment.
- **Guidance for fully vaccinated people:** Review [new guidance](#) for people in Massachusetts who have been fully vaccinated against COVID-19. This guidance is based on CDC's [Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#).
- **Updated Medicare payment rates for administration of COVID-19 vaccines:** Effective 3/15/21, the new Medicare payment rate for administering a COVID-19 vaccine will be approximately \$40 for each dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. For more information, see [Medicare COVID-19 Vaccine Shot Payment | CMS](#).
- **USP COVID-19 Vaccine Handling Toolkit.** [Download the latest toolkit](#). USP has also published the following informational handouts to share in your practice setting to help address operational gaps in handling COVID-19 vaccines:
 - [Maximizing Doses of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine](#) – provides strategies for maximizing doses, such as optimizing vial pressure and reducing vial leakage.
 - [Transporting COVID-19 Vaccines Off-Site](#) – includes an at-a-glance chart of temperature and time considerations for transport of COVID-19 vaccines to help preserve quality.
 - [Beyond-use Date in Vial or Syringe for COVID-19 Vaccines](#) – includes an at-a-glance chart of beyond-use dates for diluted or punctured vials, as applicable, and pre-drawn syringes.
- **Reminder to monitor storage units:** Monitor storage units with COVID-19 vaccine closely. If your freezer has a defrost cycle that enters refrigerated range, vaccine may begin to thaw. Once COVID-19 vaccine has begun thawing, it cannot be refrozen. As a reminder, sites should be using a digital data logger to monitor storage units storing COVID-19 vaccine. For questions about storage and handling, please contact the manufacturers:
 - [Pfizer](#): 1-800-438-1985
 - [Moderna](#): 1-866-663-3762
 - [Janssen/J&J](#): 1-800-565-4008
- **Vaccine expiration:** Reminder that some lots of COVID-19 vaccine may be expiring. Please make sure to check expiration and beyond use dates for COVID-19 vaccine.
 - Pfizer: Expiration date can be found on packaging
 - Moderna: Expiration date can be found by using QR code or www.cvdvaccine.com
 - Janssen/J&J: Expiration date can be found by using QR code on packaging or www.janssencovid19vaccine.com

Resources & Learning Opportunities

- **New** PDF: [10 Things Healthcare Providers Need to Know About the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System \(VAERS\)](#)
- **New** PDF: [How Long-Term Care Facilities Can Help Monitor COVID-19 Vaccine Safety](#)
- [CDC COCA Call Recording](#): What Clinicians Need to Know About the Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine
- Recent updates to the CDC Communication and Education Products
 - [Recognizing and responding to anaphylaxis](#)
 - [What to Do if You Have an Allergic Reaction After Getting A COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

- [Customizable COVID-19 Vaccine Content for Community-Based Organizations](#)
- [Customizable COVID-19 Vaccine Content for Essential Workers](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccines for Teachers, School Staff, and Childcare Workers | CDC](#)
- CDC [COVID-19 vaccine provider training](#)
- Visit www.mass.gov/CovidVaccineProviders for [vaccine provider FAQ](#); [guidance](#) on vaccine management and administration; and CDC and FDA [resources](#) such as v-safe.
- [EUA fact sheets](#) for providers and caregivers, available in multiple languages.
- Download Massachusetts [COVID-19 Vaccine Education and Outreach Materials](#)

Where to go when you have questions about COVID-19 vaccine

Important: Calls about vaccine viability, damage, or packing slip discrepancies must reach McKesson (for Moderna and Janssen vaccine) or Pfizer (for Pfizer vaccine) the same day the shipment arrived at the office as documented by the carrier.

- **Pfizer vaccine shipment has a problem:**
 - Pfizer Customer Service: 800-666-7248, Email: cvgovernment@pfizer.com
- **Moderna or Janssen vaccine shipment has a problem:**
 - Phone: 833-272-6635 Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.- 8 p.m. ET
 - Email (only send after hours): COVIDVaccineSupport@McKesson.com
- **Moderna Customer Service:** 1-866-MOD-ERNA or 1-866-663-3762
- **Janssen Customer Service:** 1-800-565-4008 or JSCCOVIDTEMPEXCURSION@its.jnj.com
- **Ancillary kit has a problem:**
 - McKesson Customer Service: 833-272-6634, Email: SNSSupport@McKesson.com
- **For clinical questions regarding COVID-19 vaccine** (<https://www.cdc.gov/cdc-info>)
 - Call 1-800-232-4636 or email using the [CDC-Info web form](#)
- **Vaccine Unit** (dph-vaccine-management@massmail.state.ma.us)
 - Enrollment into MCVP
 - Vaccine storage and handling and transfer
 - Vaccine shipments, inventory, and number of doses allocated
 - Vaccine wastage/expiration
- **MIIS** (miishelpdesk@mass.gov) Answers to questions can also be found at [MIIS Resource Center](#).
 - MIIS registration/onboarding
 - How to log in to the MIIS and report vaccines to the MIIS
 - Running reports in the MIIS
 - Adding users/sites to the MIIS
- **COVID-19 email box** (COVID-19-Vaccine-Plan-MA@mass.gov)
 - Who can get vaccine/vaccine prioritization
 - Where and how to get vaccinated