



## **Guidance for Facilities Receiving COVID-19 Vaccine**

### **Weeks 1-4 New York State Vaccination Program**

#### **Phase 1A Only**

#### **Summary of key points:**

- **This guidance supersedes and replaces previously issued Week 1 and Week 2 Phase 1A Guidance.**
- **COVID-19 vaccine must be given according to the prioritization plan established by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), based on ACIP recommendations.**
- **The first group to be vaccinated at any facility or vaccination site will be health care personnel within the facility at high risk for transmitting or becoming infected with COVID-19, including direct care, administrative staff, and food and housekeeping services staff who have contact with patients or infectious materials.**
- **After the front-line high-risk staff are vaccinated, facilities must vaccinate the next priority groups as detailed below. Facilities that are told to set aside allocations in order to vaccinate priority groups that do not have medical staff onsite must do so.**
- **The vaccine cannot be used for any other populations or groups other than those the facility is instructed to vaccinate at this time.**
- **If at any point, all eligible and appropriate staff as well as all prioritized groups have been vaccinated and there are vaccine doses remaining, facilities must contact the NYSDOH at [COVID19vaccine@health.ny.gov](mailto:COVID19vaccine@health.ny.gov).**
- **Vaccine cannot be transported to another location without the approval and consent of the NYSDOH. Facilities needing to transport vaccine should submit a completed redistribution form to [COVID19vaccine@health.ny.gov](mailto:COVID19vaccine@health.ny.gov) and wait for approval.**
- **Those who are administering the vaccine should be prioritized to receive vaccine as soon as doses are available.**
- **Urgent Care Center staff will be eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccine in week 3, beginning December 28th.**

Limited amounts of COVID-19 vaccine will be available during the first phase of the COVID-19 vaccination program in New York. The New York State Department of Health is developing a prioritization and allocation framework based on guidance from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). During this first phase, ACIP recommends that vaccines be provided to critical populations according to three sub-phases:

- Phase 1A: Healthcare personnel (i.e. paid and unpaid personnel working in a healthcare setting), first responders in medical roles such as emergency medical services providers, Medical Examiners and Coroners, funeral workers, ambulatory care providers, and persons living in and working in Long Term Care Facilities (LTCFs) including congregate settings overseen by Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), Office of Mental Health (OMH) and Office of Addiction Service and Support (OASAS).
- Phase 1B: Essential frontline workers and those 75 years of age and older
- Phase 1C: Other essential workers, those 16 years of age and older with high-risk medical conditions and people 65 years of age and older.

The total number of healthcare personnel in New York State (including New York City) is estimated at more than 2 million, spanning a diverse group of settings such as hospitals, LTCF, home care, emergency medical services, and ambulatory care. Vaccine providers must be prepared for an initial supply of vaccine that will not cover your entire health care workforce at once. The NYSDOH is directing all vaccine providers to follow this guidance for prioritization of their workforce during the initial period of limited supply.

**The cover memo indicates new prioritization groups added this week. Table 1 at the end of the document shows prioritization by week. Table 2 displays where prioritized groups should go to be vaccinated.**

### **Vaccinator Responsibilities**

This guidance describes steps that each vaccinating facility must take as a condition to receiving COVID-19 vaccine.

Each facility that receives vaccine:

- will be notified about how much vaccine will be received.
- must prioritize which of their own staff receives vaccination first.
- must vaccinate those who are administering the vaccine.
- will need to schedule other priority populations for vaccination within the facility.
- will be provided access to the Department's Countermeasure Data Management System (CDMS), where the priority populations outside the facility will be scheduled for vaccinations at times provided by the facility.
- may not be able to vaccinate their entire Phase 1A staff from the same shipment.
- may have enough vaccine to vaccinate those from priority populations outside the facility.

### **Identify staff prioritized for vaccine within the facility receiving vaccine**

The first group to be vaccinated will be health care personnel within the facility at high risk for transmitting or becoming infected with COVID-19. This group includes not only clinicians, but any staff who work in settings where transmission is likely, or who are at higher risk of transmitting the virus to patients who are at elevated risk of severe morbidity or mortality. This includes those who are paid and unpaid and who have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials.

#### **Identify those staff who work where:**

- Patients with COVID-19 are provided with direct care;
- Aerosolizing procedures are performed;
- Exposure to the public occurs in an uncontrolled way (reception areas, cafeterias etc.); and/or
- There are employed staff, voluntary staff, contractors and volunteers who meet the criteria.

This should include areas where patients are seen in person. This does not include those staff who do telehealth only or those staff who are able to socially distance in an office or at home.

If there is insufficient vaccine to vaccinate all your front line, high-risk staff, it may be necessary to rank your employees according to age, high-risk medical conditions if known, or by randomly selecting those to be vaccinated.

### **Plan immediately for the second COVID-19 dose**

Make appointments for staff and those from other priority populations to receive the second dose 21 or 28 days later (depending on which vaccine is used) at the time the first dose is administered. It is important to send frequent reminders about when and where to receive the second dose. All vaccinated staff must be tracked to ensure they get the matching second dose on time. Individuals must receive two doses of the same vaccine (e.g., you must receive two doses of the Pfizer vaccine or two doses of the Moderna vaccine). They **are not** interchangeable. Priority groups will receive the second dose in the same order as the first dose was administered.

### **Vaccination of those from outside of the facility**

The NYSDOH will let you know which populations of staff or residents will be coming to your facility for vaccination from other agencies or priority groups. These persons will be vaccinated according to the instructions of the NYSDOH. It is not the responsibility of the facility receiving vaccine to reach out to the populations outside of their facility as they will be provided links to the designated schedule by the Department.

Planning for a second dose will need to occur for all facility staff and, also, those coming from outside the facility. However, please note the initial allocation is for the first dose of the vaccine. **Do not reserve vaccine for the second dose as these will be shipped to your facility separately. Again, all vaccine must be used in**

**the week you receive it.**

### **Proof of Occupation**

Since vaccine is scarce, it is important that individuals being vaccinated that come from outside the facility bring proof of working as a health care staff member or in a prioritized profession to the vaccination site. This could include an employee ID card, a letter from an employer or affiliated organization, or a pay stub. Alternatively, employers or organizations can provide a list of staff who meet the criteria for vaccination.

### **Vaccine Safety**

Post-vaccination monitoring is an essential part of the COVID-19 vaccination program. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is promoting and encouraging all those being vaccinated to participate in V-Safe, a smart-phone based application that will allow those vaccinated to enter their symptoms in the days after vaccination using text messaging. V-Safe also provides reminders for the second dose and telephone follow up for anyone who reports medically significant adverse events. V-Safe materials can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/vsafe>, including a V-Safe information sheet. Please print out the information sheet and hand to each person vaccinated.

### **Equity**

All workers who meet criteria for vaccination must be included, regardless of job title. For example, doctors, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, certified nursing assistants, personal care assistants, environmental workers, ward clerks, dietary workers, and others who work on the same floor or ward and who have direct contact with COVID-19 patients should all be eligible for vaccination at the same time.

### **Communicating the Plan**

Please be sure to clearly communicate how prioritization will work to all staff and provide updates. Identify the individuals who meet the prioritization criteria and communicate to them your plan for offering COVID-19 vaccine. Facilities should consider implementing an appointment schedule to make it possible to complete the first dose of the vaccine series for your high-risk personnel as soon as possible after receiving the vaccine. All facilities are required to track uptake among their staff and keep records of staff who decline vaccination.

This guidance is in effect from the date of issuance until it is updated, or additional guidance is issued by NYSDOH. For questions, please contact the New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Immunization at [COVID19vaccine@health.ny.gov](mailto:COVID19vaccine@health.ny.gov).

**New York State Vaccination Program Guidance**  
**Week-By-Week Prioritization and Vaccination Location**  
**Phase 1A Only**

**Table 1: Prioritization**

<b>Week:</b>	<b>Facilities receiving vaccine:</b>	<b>Populations prioritized:</b>
1 (Beginning of campaign)	- Hospitals	- High-risk hospital staff, affiliates, volunteers and contract staff, following the clinical risk assessment guidance
2 (Beginning 12/21/20)	- Hospitals - FQHCs	- High-risk hospital staff including State-operated OMH psychiatric centers - Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Personnel - Medical Examiners and Coroners - Funeral workers who have direct contact with infectious material and bodily fluids - Health care or other high-risk direct care essential staff working in LTCFs and long-term, congregate settings overseen by OPWDD, OMH and OASAS - Persons living in LTCFs and in long-term congregate settings overseen by OPWDD and OMH
3 (Beginning 12/28/20)	- Hospitals - FQHCs - Urgent Care Centers (UCCs)	- High-risk hospital and FQHC staff, including OMH psychiatric centers - Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Personnel - Medical Examiners and Coroners - Agency staff and residents in congregate living situations run by the Office of People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) the Office of Mental Health (OMH) and the Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS). - Urgent Care providers - Any staff administering COVID-19 Vaccinations -
4 (Beginning 1/4/21)	- Hospitals - FQHCs - Urgent Care Centers (UCCs)	All populations included in week 3, as well as: - All Outpatient/Ambulatory front line, high risk health care providers who provide direct in-person patient care or other staff in a position where they have direct contact with patients, such as receptionists, of any age.

	- Regional Hubs and/or Local Health Departments	- All front line, high risk public health workers who have direct contact with patients, including those conducting COVID-19 Tests
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Table 2: Where to Be Vaccinated		
Detailed Vaccine Prioritized Groups & Responsibility for Vaccination – Week 1		
Vaccine Recipient Group	Who is vaccinating them - NYS	Who is vaccinating them - NYC
Hospital high-risk staff, following the clinical risk assessment guidance	- Hospitals	- Hospitals
Detailed Vaccine Prioritized Groups & Responsibility for Vaccination – Week 2		
Vaccine Recipient Group	Who is vaccinating them - NYS	Who is vaccinating them - NYC
All EMS	- Hospitals	- Hospitals - FDNY (only for members of the Department) - New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH) with NYC REMSCO
All FQHC staff following the clinical risk assessment guidance	- FQHCs	- FQHCs - NYCDOHMH
OPWDD – staff and residents	- Hospitals or FQHCs	- Hospitals or FQHCs, or

		- Affiliated Physicians, or - YAI Premier Health Care
OMH State-operated – staff and residents	- OMH Psychiatric Centers	- OMH Psychiatric Centers
OMH voluntary operated – staff and residents	- Hospitals or FQHCs	- Hospitals or FQHCs, or - Affiliated Physicians, or - YAI Premier Health Care
OASAS State-operated – staff	- OMH Psychiatric Hospitals	- OMH Psychiatric Hospitals
OASAS voluntary operated – staff	- Hospitals or FQHCs	- Hospitals or FQHCs, or - Affiliated Physicians, or - YAI Premier Health Care, or - OMH Psychiatric Hospitals
All medical examiners and coroners, funeral workers	- Hospitals	- Hospitals and NYCDOHMH
Hospital high-risk staff, following the clinical risk assessment guidance	- Hospitals	- Hospitals

**Detailed Vaccine Prioritized Groups & Responsibility for Vaccination – Week 3 & 4**

Vaccine Recipient Group	Who is vaccinating them - NYS	Who is vaccinating them - NYC
All EMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hospitals</li> <li>- UCCs</li> <li>-LHD PODs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hospitals</li> <li>- FDNY (only for members of the Department)</li> <li>- New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYCDOHMH) with NYC REMSCO</li> <li>- UCCs</li> </ul>
All FQHC staff following the clinical risk assessment guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FQHCs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- FQHCs</li> <li>- NYCDOHMH</li> </ul>
OPWDD – staff and residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hospitals or FQHCs</li> <li>- UCCs</li> <li>- LHD PODs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hospitals or FQHCs, or</li> <li>- Affiliated Physicians, or</li> <li>- YAI Premier Health Care</li> <li>- UCCs</li> </ul>
OMH State-Operated – staff and residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- OMH Psychiatric Centers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- OMH Psychiatric Centers</li> </ul>
OMH Voluntary Operated – staff and residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hospitals or FQHCs</li> <li>- UCCs</li> <li>-LHD PODs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hospitals or FQHCs, or</li> <li>- Affiliated Physicians, or</li> <li>- YAI Premier Health Care</li> </ul>



		- UCCs
OASAS State-Operated – staff	- OMH Psychiatric Hospitals	- OMH Psychiatric Hospitals
OASAS Voluntary Operated – staff and residents	- Hospitals or FQHCs - UCCs -LHD PODs	- Hospitals or FQHCs, or - Affiliated Physicians, or - YAI Premier Health Care, or - OMH Psychiatric Hospitals - UCCs
All medical examiners and coroners, funeral workers	- Hospitals - UCCs -LHD PODs	- Hospitals and NYCDOHMH
Hospital high-risk staff, following the clinical risk assessment guidance	- Hospitals	- Hospitals
Urgent Care Center Providers	- UCCs	- UCCs
Staff administering the COVID-19 vaccine	-TBD	-TBD
Outpatient, ambulatory front-line/high-risk healthcare personnel ( <b>Week 4 only</b> )	-TBD	-TBD
All front-line, high-risk public health workers who have direct contact with patients (Week 4 only)	-TBD	-TBD

Health care workers at testing sites (Week 4 only)	- TBD	- TBD
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