



COVID-19 Vaccination Program Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need to be enrolled in the NYC COVID-19 Vaccination Program to receive COVID-19 vaccines?

Yes. All providers who would like to receive COVID-19 vaccines and vaccinate their patients must first register with the Citywide Immunization Registry (CIR) and create a CIR Online Registry account by visiting a816-healthpsi.nyc.gov/OnlineRegistration/dohmh/DOHMHService.action. To begin enrollment, a designated staff member should log on to the CIR Online Registry. After logging on, navigate to the VIM/COVID icon, select the COVID-19 Vaccination Program tab, and click on the “Start COVID-19 Vaccination Program Enrollment” button to receive an email invitation to the Vaccine Program Agreement System (VPAS). Enrollment instructions can be found at nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/covid/providers/covid-19-provider-presentation-vaccinations-123120.pdf.

How long does the COVID-19 Vaccination Program enrollment process take?

It should take approximately 30 minutes. Once submitted, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (NYC Health Department) approves applications within approximately 24 hours. If there are errors or questions about your application, approval may take longer.

How do I update information on my COVID-19 application in VPAS after submitting?

Refer to the VPAS Editing and Resubmitting Instructions Guide at nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/cir/covid-19-vpas-guide-edit-resubmit.pdf.

Do I need an ultra-cold freezer to store the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine?

No. The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine “orange cap” formulation for children ages 5 to 11 years and the Pfizer trisucrose COVID-19 vaccine “gray cap” formulation for people age 12 years and older can be stored in an ultra-cold freezer for 9 months or in the refrigerator for up to 10 weeks. The 10 weeks counts towards the 9 months after the manufacture date.

Where can I find guidance regarding COVID-19 vaccine storage and handling?

Refer to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Product Information by U.S. Vaccine at cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product for the latest information.

What are the steps I should take if the temperature in my storage unit is out of range or if I stored the vaccines in the incorrect unit type?

Temperatures outside of the recommended range are considered excursions. Providers must quarantine the vaccines, document details of the excursion, contact the vaccine manufacturers to determine viability, document corrective actions taken to prevent excursions from reoccurring, and submit a Temperature Excursion Incident Report to the NYC Health Department at pqaunit@health.nyc.gov or fax 347-396-8841. To find a copy of the report, visit nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/cir/covid-19-2021-temperature-excursion-form.pdf.

What should I do if there is a COVID vaccine administration error (such as incorrect dose or vaccines expired)?

Contact the vaccine manufacturer to determine vaccine viability and report the error to the NYC Health Department at COVIDVax@health.nyc.gov.

What is the minimum order amount for the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines?

The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine “orange cap” formulation for children ages 5 to 11 years and the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine for adults age 18 and older are available to order in 100 dose increments. The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine “gray cap” formulation for people age 12 and older is available to order in 300 dose increments. For questions about vaccine ordering, refer to the COVID-19 Vaccine Ordering & Inventory Management Guide at nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/cir/covid-19-vaccine-inventory-management.pdf or email COVIDVax@health.nyc.gov.

Do I need to screen for Vaccines for Children Eligibility for pediatric patients?

No. Screening for Vaccines for Children (VFC) eligibility is not required.

What is the insurance reimbursement for administering COVID-19 vaccine?

The Medicaid administration fee for COVID-19 vaccination has increased and is currently \$40 per dose. This is retroactive for services not already reimbursed and applies to Medicaid managed care and fee for service. Many commercial plans also reimburse for COVID-19 vaccination. Check with individual health plans about their reimbursement policy. New York State Medicaid also reimburses for COVID-19 vaccine counseling for patients who have not received any dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. More information can be found by visiting health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/program/update/2021/no13_2021-11.

Do I need to report all COVID-19 vaccine doses administered?

Yes. All COVID-19 vaccine doses administered must be reported to the Citywide Immunization Registry (CIR) within 24 hours. Patient consent is not required for reporting.

What do I need to connect my electronic health record system to the CIR and report COVID-19 vaccine doses administered?

Please refer to the CIR HL7 reporting requirements guide for COVID-19 at nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/cir/cir-hl7-covid-19-reporting-requirements.pdf.

Will I be fined if I do not administer all COVID-19 vaccine doses received?

No. There is no penalty for wastage and no timeframe by which providers must use COVID-19 vaccine doses received (other than the expiry date).

Will I be penalized for vaccine wastage?

No. Providers can open a vial to administer a dose to a single patient and will not be penalized for wastage. Providers are encouraged to use every opportunity to vaccinate all eligible patients.

I have additional questions. Where can I get more information?

Please refer to the CDC's Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines at cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/clinical-considerations/covid-19-vaccines-us.html and resources available on the NYC Health Department’s COVID-19 vaccine provider webpage, nyc.gov/health/covidproviders.

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves. 1.5.22