



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

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09/07/2023

Dear Colleague,

As COVID-19 vaccines move to the commercial market this fall, many have voiced concern that New Yorkers will face new cost barriers to vaccination services. This letter will explain patient cost obligations in more detail; in summary, **most patients will still be able to receive COVID-19 vaccines at no cost** (no co-pay, no co-insurance, no cost sharing).

Since late 2020, the federal government has purchased and distributed COVID-19 vaccine supply to providers at no cost. Providers have administered COVID-19 vaccines at no cost to patients and have been able to bill insurance plans for the administration fee.

After commercialization, providers will need to purchase COVID-19 vaccines from the commercial market for most patients, as they do for other vaccines. For uninsured and underinsured patients, after commercialization, providers can obtain no-cost COVID-19 vaccines through two programs:

1. Vaccines for Children (VFC)
2. Vaccines for Adults (VFA), also known as the Bridge Access Program for COVID-19 Vaccines

Fortunately, although providers will need to purchase COVID-19 vaccines for most patients, patients will not need to pay out-of-pocket to get vaccinated. Please ensure your staff are able to answer patient questions about vaccine costs. Here is information by insurance type:

- **Medicare Part B:** Provider supplies vaccines. [Medicare](#) reimburses for the cost of the vaccine and for administration. No patient cost sharing/co-insurance.
- **Medicare Advantage:** Provider supplies vaccines. [Plan reimburses](#) for the cost of the vaccine and for administration. No patient cost sharing/co-insurance/co-pay for in-network.
- **Medicaid/Medicaid Managed Care/Child Health Plus (CHP):** *For children ages 18 years and under,* the VFC program provides vaccines to enrolled providers at no cost. Medicaid/plan reimburses administration fee. *For adults,* provider supplies vaccines. Plan reimburses for the cost of the vaccine and for administration. No patient cost sharing/co-pay.
- **Commercial/Private:** Provider supplies vaccines. Plan reimburses for the cost of the vaccine and for administration. COVID-19 vaccine has

been added to the Affordable Care Act preventive services list based on ACIP recommendation, so there is no patient cost sharing/co-pay/co-insurance for in-network vaccination services for most commercial insurance plans

- **Uninsured/Underinsured:** For children ages 18 years and under, the VFC program provides vaccines to enrolled providers at no cost. The federal [Bridge Access Program](#) will provide vaccines at no cost for NYC's VFA program and certain chain pharmacies. Providers receiving these vaccines will provide no-cost vaccination services to uninsured and underinsured adults across NYC. More information on services available for this group will be shared as it becomes available.

See [COVID-19 vaccine coding reference](#) published by our NYC REACH program for more information on billing insurance for these services.

Patients can search for sites offering vaccination services for their insurance type by visiting the [NYC Vaccine Finder](#).

#### Access to Health Care

Ensuring that all New Yorkers have access to health care when they need it is a top priority of the NYC Health Department. Refer your patients to get free enrollment assistance to sign up for low- or no-cost health insurance, by having them call 311, text CoveredNYC (SeguroNYC for Spanish) to 877877, or visit the GetCoveredNYC webpage at [nyc.gov/getcoverednyc](http://nyc.gov/getcoverednyc). To connect with a Health Department Certified Application Counselor, visit [nyc.gov/health/healthcoverage](http://nyc.gov/health/healthcoverage).

We appreciate your continued commitment to vaccinating New Yorkers.



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