

## COVID-19 VACCINE OVERVIEW FOR PHASE 1A HEALTHCARE PERSONNEL NOT AFFILIATED WITH A HOSPITAL OR HEALTH SYSTEM

### BACKGROUND

Getting Pennsylvanians immunized with a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine is an essential step in reducing the number of virus-related cases, hospitalizations and deaths. The Pennsylvania Department of Health (Department) guides the distribution and administration of the COVID-19 vaccine throughout 66 of the 67 counties in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Philadelphia County receives independent federal funding and is establishing its own COVID-19 [vaccination administration plan](#).

The Department's goals are to prioritize persons, while the vaccine supply remains limited, who receive the vaccine to maximize benefits and minimize harms caused by the virus, promote justice, mitigate health inequities, and promote transparency. In Phase 1A of the Department's [Pennsylvania's COVID-19 Interim Vaccination Plan](#), the Department needs providers enrolled to provide the COVID-19 vaccine, which are hospitals, health systems, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), and pharmacies, to vaccinate healthcare personnel not affiliated with a hospital or health system.

Interested healthcare personnel not affiliated with a hospital or health system should follow the steps outlined in this document to receive the COVID-19 vaccine during Phase 1A.

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEALTHCARE PERSONNEL AND THEIR EMPLOYER

Enrolled hospitals, health systems, FQHCs and pharmacies have been directed in the [Vaccination of Community Healthcare Personnel Order](#) to designate at least 10 percent of each vaccine shipment for vaccination of Phase 1A healthcare personnel not affiliated with a hospital or health system. Local county or municipal health departments (CMHDs) may also be offering vaccination clinics to only healthcare personnel not affiliated with a hospital or health system.

#### 1. IDENTIFY WHICH TYPE OF ENROLLED COVID-19 VACCINE PROVIDER IS MOST APPROPRIATE

To streamline the vaccination process and vaccinate all persons in Phase 1A as quickly as possible, healthcare personnel or their employer should identify, to the best of their ability, one enrolled COVID-19 vaccine provider that can accommodate their vaccination needs. Contacting more than one enrolled provider could cause delays in receiving the vaccine for all healthcare personnel in Phase 1A.

- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) organizations identified in Phase 1A should work with the hospital with which they have a primary affiliation or to which they routinely transport patients.
- All other healthcare personnel in Phase 1A not affiliated with a hospital or health system should work with an enrolled hospital, health system, FQHC or pharmacy in their jurisdiction.

#### 2. FIND A PARTICIPATING LOCATION

A map of enrolled hospitals, health systems, FQHCs and pharmacies vaccinating healthcare personnel, including facility contact information, can be found on the Department's [website](#). Healthcare personnel should reach out to the listed contact information to schedule a vaccine appointment.

#### 3. CALL FOR PATIENCE AND PRIORITIZE STAFF

The vaccination process must be orderly and not overwhelm the capacity of the facilities providing the vaccination services. Vaccination of all Pennsylvanians, including those healthcare personnel in Phase 1A not

affiliated with a hospital or health system, depends on the vaccine supply. Initial supply of vaccine is expected to be limited in comparison to the demand and there will not immediately be enough vaccine to immunize everyone in Phase 1A. Estimates of the number of healthcare personnel in Pennsylvania approach 1 million individuals. Employers of healthcare personnel not affiliated with a hospital or health system must prioritize staff to receive vaccine consistent with the Phase 1A sub-prioritization guidance found in [Pennsylvania's COVID-19 Interim Vaccination Plan](#).

#### **4. SCHEDULE FULL VACCINE REGIMEN**

A vaccine provider shall provide the brand and date of the vaccination given to each individual vaccinated, along with the COVID-19 vaccine reminder card that provides a date for a return appointment for the second dose of vaccine. It is the responsibility of the healthcare personnel, not the vaccine provider, to maintain the scheduled appointment for the second dose, with the vaccine provider. Both the Moderna and the Pfizer BioNTech vaccines require two doses: a priming dose, followed by a booster shot. The interval between Moderna doses is 28 days; for the Pfizer vaccine, the interval is 21 days.

#### **5. PROVIDE NECESSARY DOCUMENTATION**

Healthcare personnel not affiliated with a hospital or health system must provide proof of occupation to receive a vaccine. This could include a state license or certification, letter from the employer on organization letterhead, facility identification/security badge, group listing on employer letterhead, or other proof of occupation. Although vaccination information will be reported to the Department by vaccine providers, all healthcare personnel or their employers are requested to track vaccine participation and keep records of those who accept and those who decline vaccination.

## RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Pennsylvania COVID-19 Interim Vaccination Plan can be found on the Department's [website](#). More information on COVID-19 can be found on the Department's website: [www.health.pa.gov](http://www.health.pa.gov)