



COVID-19 Vaccines

Frequently Asked Questions

Michigan.gov/Coronavirus

The information in this document will change frequently as we learn more about COVID-19 vaccines. There is a lot we are learning as the pandemic and COVID-19 vaccines evolve. The approach in Michigan will adapt as we learn more.

Vaccine Distribution/Prioritization

When will the vaccine be available?

Michigan is expected to receive a limited amount of vaccine by mid-December 2020. Due to the limited supply, MDHHS will have to prioritize how the vaccine will be distributed. Supply of the vaccine will increase substantially over the next few months. Those eligible to receive the vaccine will change as supply increases.

Who will get the vaccine first?

Distribution of the vaccine in Michigan will be in a [phased approach](#) because it will be several months before supply increases enough to vaccinate everyone.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) have defined different vaccination phases. The ACIP recently voted on allocating initial supplies of COVID-19 vaccine. These recommendations review who is recommended to receive the first phase of the COVID-19 vaccine. For further information review, [The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' Interim Recommendation for Allocating Initial Supplies of COVID-19 Vaccine](#).

Michigan has prioritized vaccine allocation within CDC phases, with an emphasis on both ensuring the continuing functioning of the health care system and essential services in the community and protecting people at increased risk for severe COVID-19 illness. *These prioritizations may change as more information on vaccine effectiveness and additional vaccination products become available.*

It is important to note that vaccination in one phase may not be complete before vaccination in another phase begins. There may be vaccination of individuals in different phases that occurs simultaneously. The timing of the start of vaccination in a phase is dependent on the supply of vaccine from the manufacturer, how vaccine is allocated from the federal level to Michigan, and the capacity to administer the vaccine to populations.

MDHHS has created interim guidance for partners on how to prioritize vaccine within these phases.

When will the vaccine be available to the general public?

The vaccine will be available to the general public when supply substantially increases in 2021, possibly in late spring. Until the supply substantially increases, priority will be given to health care providers, essential workers, and vulnerable populations (i.e., adults 65 years of age and older and adults with high risk medical conditions).

Do we have to wait for one group to be vaccinated before the next group can receive vaccine? How long will it take to move between phases?

Vaccination of groups in one phase will likely not be complete before vaccination in another phase begins. Vaccination in these phases will likely overlap.

The timing of the start of vaccination in a phase is dependent on the guidance from CDC or ACIP, supply of vaccine from the manufacturer, how vaccine is allocated from the federal level to Michigan, and the capacity to administer the vaccine to populations.

We hope to be able to offer vaccination to all adults in Michigan in late spring.

Why are essential workers receiving the vaccine before the general public?

Essential workers keep systems critical to public health and safety functioning. Workers in essential and specific industries are considered part of America's critical infrastructure, as defined by the [Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency](#). Many of these workers have jobs that require significant person-to-person interactions. Current data show that many of these workers are at increased risk for getting COVID-19. Early vaccine access is critical not only to protect them from becoming ill, but also to maintain the essential services they provide to U.S. communities.

How are essential workers identified and prioritized to receive the vaccine?

MDHHS, Michigan State Police Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division, local public health and local emergency management will consider the Critical Infrastructure Protection (CIP) Program as well as continuity of operations plans in prioritization of some workers.

Vaccination will be coordinated through local public health. In addition, work is underway to leverage existing relationships with Michigan corporations that could leverage their own occupational health programs to implement vaccine administration when the appropriate phase is initiated.

Why are school staff and child care providers receiving the vaccine before the general public?

Schools and child care contribute to children's growth and well-being by providing educational instruction; supporting the development of social and emotional skills; creating a safe environment for learning; addressing nutritional needs; and facilitating physical activity. Vaccination of these staff is essential to improve the capacity to have in person instruction.

Will homeless people receive the vaccine?

Yes. Local health departments will coordinate with Federally Qualified Health Centers and other providers to administer the vaccine to homeless individuals.

Will tribal populations receive the vaccine?

Yes. Vaccine will be administered to tribal members through their tribal health clinics.

Will migrant workers receive the vaccine?

Yes. Local health departments will coordinate with Federally Qualified Health Centers and other providers to administer the vaccine.

Why are pregnant women and children not included in the vaccine plan?

We await further guidance on whether these groups will be recommended for vaccination. Vaccination of these groups is not recommended because of limited data on vaccine safety and efficacy for these groups at this time.

What to Expect When You Get Vaccinated

Is there a cost to get vaccinated?

No fees will be charged to get vaccinated. There will be no cost sharing from insurance plans. Vaccine doses purchased with U.S. taxpayer dollars will be given to the American people at no cost. COVID-19 providers agree to administer vaccine regardless of an individual's ability to pay and regardless of their coverage status, and may not seek any reimbursement, including through balance billing, from a vaccine recipient. However, vaccine providers will be able to charge administration fees for giving or administering the shot to someone. Vaccine providers can get this fee reimbursed by the patient's public or private insurance company or, for uninsured patients, by the Health Resources and Services Administration's Provider Relief Fund.

Will more than one dose of COVID-19 Vaccine be required?

Yes. All but one of the COVID-19 vaccines currently in Phase 3 clinical trials in the United States need two shots to be effective. It is very important that you get both doses within the required time frame to ensure the best protection from COVID-19.

How will I be reminded to get the second dose?

MDHHS plans to use multiple ways to notify you of your second dose. COVID-19 vaccination record cards (reminder cards) will be provided to you when you receive the COVID-19 vaccine. The card provides room for a written reminder for a second-dose appointment. If you have a smartphone, consider taking a photo of your vaccination record and entering the date the next vaccine dose is due in your calendar. MDHHS is also developing text messaging reminders that will be sent prior to your second dose. In addition, health care providers or health systems may also have other methods in place to help remind you of when to return for your second dose.

Again, to ensure the best protection from COVID-19, it is very important to not skip the second dose. The second dose must be from the same vaccine manufacturer, so it will be important to ensure that where you receive your second dose has the right vaccine. If you can, it would be best to follow up with the same provider who gave you your first shot.

How is Michigan National Guard helping with vaccination?

The Michigan National Guard (MING) is providing support to vaccination efforts in hospitals and long-term care facilities at this time.

Can any doctor's office, clinic, or pharmacy offer the COVID-19 vaccine?

Doctor's offices, clinics, and pharmacies who are enrolled in the vaccination program can offer the vaccine when the vaccine becomes available to them. Initially the federal government will distribute a limited supply of vaccine to each state. Michigan will allocate this limited supply to hospitals and health care settings where workers have contact with patients. Later distribution will be coordinated through local health departments, and eventually as supply increases doctor's offices, clinics, and pharmacies will be able to obtain the vaccine directly.

Will people who have already had COVID-19 be able to get vaccinated?

There is not enough information currently available to say if or for how long after infection someone is protected from getting COVID-19 again; this is called natural immunity. Early evidence suggests natural immunity from COVID-19 may not last very long, but more studies are needed to better understand this. Until we have a vaccine available and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) makes recommendations to CDC on how to best use COVID-19 vaccines, there will not be any information available on whether people who had COVID-19 should get a COVID-19 vaccine.

Do I need to keep wearing a mask after I get vaccinated?

Michiganders should continue to wear masks, social distance from those not in their household and wash their hands, even after receiving vaccine. More information is available on the CDC website in their [FAQ document](#).

Safety of the Vaccine/Side Effects

Is the vaccine safe?

We understand that some people may be concerned about getting vaccinated once a COVID-19 vaccine is available in the United States. The process used to approve the COVID-19 vaccines is the same proven process that was used to create safe and effective vaccines for the flu, polio, measles, pertussis (whooping cough) and more. While these vaccines are being developed as quickly as possible through the help of global cooperation and unprecedented public and private funding, our routine processes and procedures remain in place to ensure the safety of any vaccine that is authorized or approved for use. Safety is a top priority. The U.S. vaccine safety system ensures that all vaccines are as safe as possible.

More information about the safety of the vaccine is available at the CDC and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) website:

- [CDC Vaccine Benefits website](#)
- [CDC Vaccine Safety website](#)
- [CHOP website](#)

How can a safe vaccine be made so quickly?

Vaccine development typically takes many years. However, scientists had already begun research for coronavirus vaccines during previous outbreaks caused by related coronaviruses such as SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) and MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome). That earlier research provided a head start for rapid development of vaccines to protect against infection with COVID-19. Additional steps were also taken to shorten the timeline without sacrificing safety such as:

- Overlapping phase I and phase II clinical trials. Phase I studies include a small number of people and evaluate whether the vaccine causes an immune response and is safe. Scientists could look at data from a group of people as phase II was progressing to make these evaluations.
- While completing large phase III trials, manufacturers began producing the vaccine, so that if it were shown to be safe and effective, they would have large numbers of doses ready. This is not normally done because if the vaccine does not work, the manufacturer will have spent a significant amount of money to produce something that needs to be thrown away.
- Traditional vaccine production involves growing viruses in living cells and purifying the virus. There are challenges associated with this process that takes time. The mRNA vaccine has an advantage in that large amounts of the mRNA can be synthesized very rapidly.
- While waiting for a vaccine to be ready, many other aspects of vaccine delivery were prepared (e.g., developing plans for how to distribute the first, limited quantities available, ensuring adequate supplies for distributing and administering vaccine.)

More information is available at the [CHOP website](#).

Does the vaccine have any side effects?

Most people do not have serious problems after being vaccinated. We will understand more about mild side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine before we start to use it and as the vaccine recommendations come out.

Some studies have begun to show that COVID-19 vaccines may give the person a stronger immune response than other vaccines that people are familiar with. Your arm may be sore, red, or warm to the touch. You may experience a low-grade fever, headache, and just a general feeling of “not yourself”. These are signs that your immune system is doing exactly what it is supposed to, which is produce an immune response for you to have protection against disease. This is a normal response in the process of your body building immunity.

Protecting your Privacy

What information will be collected about me when I receive the vaccine?

When vaccines are administered your name, address, and vaccine given are required to be reported to the Michigan Care Improvement Registry (MCIR) which is the state’s immunization registry.

Will information collected about me be shared with anyone?

Providers and local health departments who have access to the MCIR (after signing the required MCIR Usage agreement that governs protection of the information) can view a person's record to know what vaccines they have received.

What information will be shared? With whom?

Michigan will share vaccination information with the CDC but in de-identified aggregate form (i.e. not containing person level information).

Where can I get more information?

More information is available about coronavirus on the [State of Michigan Coronavirus website](#).

If you have additional questions, you can contact us at the COVID Hotline at 1-888-535-6136.

For more information about coronavirus review:

- [CDC COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- [CHOP Preventing COVID-19](#)

Information for providers who wish to enroll in [Michigan's Covid-19 Vaccination Program](#).