

## COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet

### Priority Populations and Vaccine Distribution

Ohio is distributing safe, effective COVID-19 vaccines statewide to those who choose to be vaccinated. The COVID-19 vaccine development process included steps comparable with those used to develop previous vaccines, such as the flu or measles vaccine. Immediately after the first COVID-19 vaccine obtained emergency use authorization (EUA) from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the state began strategically and thoughtfully distributing vaccine to Ohioans most at risk, and developed a phased approach to vaccination while supply is limited. Ohio's distribution has been guided by recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM), and has been customized to meet Ohio's specific needs.

#### **Ohio's Phased Approach**

Ohio's main goal is clear: to save lives. While vaccine supply is limited, Ohio is following a phased approach to vaccine administration. In the first vaccination phases, priority is being given to individuals at the highest risk, as well as essential healthcare workers and personnel caring for COVID-19 patients. The speed at which Ohio will move through each of the phases is largely dependent upon the number of vaccine doses available. As vaccine supply increases, COVID-19 vaccines will be available to all Ohioans who choose to be vaccinated.

- **Phase 1 (Supply Limited)** – Vaccine is available in limited supply and will be available only for specific critical populations. Ohio will focus on vaccinating those most at risk, as well as essential healthcare workers and personnel caring for COVID-19 patients.
- **Phase 2 (Supply Increasing)** – Vaccine availability is increasing and can be offered to a larger group of specific critical populations who choose to be vaccinated.
- **Phases 3-4 (Widely Available)** – Once the vaccine is widely available, Ohio will continue to strategically vaccinate Ohioans if they choose to receive vaccine.

#### **Phase 1A**

During Phase 1A, which began Dec. 14, 2020, priority was given to vulnerable individuals who live in close proximity and those who care for them. This phase includes:

- Healthcare workers and personnel who are routinely involved in the care of COVID-19 patients.
- Residents and staff in nursing homes.
- Residents and staff in assisted living facilities.
- Patients and staff at state psychiatric hospitals.
- People with developmental disabilities and those with mental health disorders, including substance-use disorders, who live in group homes, residential facilities, or centers, and staff at those locations.
- Residents and staff at our two state-run homes for Ohio veterans.
- EMS responders.

## **Phase 1B**

During Phase 1B, which began Jan. 19, 2021, following a staggered schedule, the focus continues to be protection of Ohioans at the highest risk for severe illness or death from COVID-19, and ensuring K-12 students could return to the classroom. This phase includes:

- Ohioans, age 65 and up.
- Ohioans born with or who have early childhood conditions that are carried into adulthood, which put them at a higher risk for adverse outcomes due to COVID-19.
  - Sickle cell anemia.
  - Down syndrome.
  - Cystic fibrosis.
  - Muscular dystrophy.
  - Cerebral palsy.
  - Spina bifida.
  - People born with severe heart defects, requiring regular specialized medical care.
  - People with severe type 1 diabetes, who have been hospitalized for this in the past year.
  - Phenylketonuria (PKU), Tay-Sachs, and other rare, inherited metabolic disorders.
  - Epilepsy with continuing seizures; hydrocephaly; microcephaly, and other severe neurological disorders.
  - Turner syndrome, fragile X syndrome, Prader-Willi syndrome, and other severe genetic disorders.
  - People with severe asthma, who have been hospitalized for this in the past year.
  - Alpha and beta thalassemia.
  - Solid organ transplant candidates and recipients
- Adults/employees in K-12 schools that want to go back to, or to remain with, in-person or hybrid learning models.

## **PHASE 1B TIMELINE**

Vaccinations in Phase 1B began the week of Jan. 19, 2021. Governor DeWine announced a schedule for offering vaccinations to the estimated 2.2 million people who are eligible for the vaccine under this phase, beginning with those who are 80 or older. With the addition of each new age group, vaccinations will continue for the previous age group. It will take a number of weeks to distribute all of the vaccine given the limited doses available.

- Jan. 19, 2021 – Ohioans 80 years of age and older.
  - Jan. 25, 2021 –
    - Ohioans 75 years of age and older.
    - Those with a developmental or intellectual disability **AND** one of the qualifying conditions listed above.
- If you believe you fall into this category:**
- County boards of developmental disabilities will reach out to you to coordinate vaccination if you are already receiving services from the board and it knows that you qualify.
  - If you have not been contacted, or if you do not receive services through a board of developmental disabilities, you must reach out to the board in your county to coordinate your vaccination. A directory of county boards can be found [on the Ohio Board of Developmental Disabilities website](#).
  - The board will work with a children’s hospital or a local health department to schedule your vaccination appointment.
  - Vaccinations will only be given at local health departments or participating children’s hospitals in conjunction with the local boards. **Do not go to your local pharmacy for scheduling or vaccination.**
- Feb. 1, 2021 –
    - Ohioans 70 years of age and older.
    - Employees of K-12 schools that wish to remain or return to in-person or hybrid models.
  - Feb. 8, 2021 – Ohioans 65 years of age and older.
  - Feb. 15, 2021 – Ohioans born with or who have specific early childhood conditions that are carried into adulthood, which put them at a higher risk for adverse outcomes due to COVID-19, listed above.

- Ohioans with one of the above Phase 1B qualifying medical conditions may choose to receive the vaccine at the provider of their choice, but will be asked by their vaccine provider to verify that they are, in fact, eligible at this time.

## **Phase 1C**

Vaccinations for Phase 1C began on March 4, 2021. This phase includes:

- Individuals who have additional medical conditions that may increase their risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19. The new qualifying conditions are not already covered through Ohio's age-based approach to vaccine eligibility.
- Ohioans who work in certain occupations, including child care services, funeral services, and law enforcement and correction services.
- Eligible individuals can receive a vaccine from the provider of their choice. Individuals may be asked to confirm during the registration or screening process that they are eligible to receive the vaccine based on a qualifying medical condition or based on their occupation.

## **MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND WOMEN WHO ARE PREGNANT**

Approximately 141,000 Ohioans with the following conditions will be eligible to receive the vaccine.

- People with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), also known as Lou Gehrig's disease.
- Bone marrow transplant recipients.
  - These are sometimes also called hematopoietic cell or stem cell transplants, and these patients are undergoing treatment primarily for cancer and certain anemias, and they face an increased risk of severe COVID-19 illness.
  - This group does NOT include the kind of stem-cell injections people might receive for the treatment of orthopedic problems, especially for their knees.
- People with type 1 diabetes.
- Pregnant women.

## **OCCUPATIONS**

- **Child care services:** Staff members at child care centers and pre-kindergarten programs who have regular, ongoing direct contact with children enrolled in these programs. There are approximately 40,400 eligible Ohioans in this category.
  - Administrators, lead and assistant teachers, and substitute teachers enrolled in [Ohio's Professional Registry](#) who are currently working in open child care or pre-kindergarten programs.
  - Licensing specialists employed by the [Ohio Department of Job and Family Services](#) or a county job and family services agency.
  - The program does NOT include parent volunteers, board members, or owners/administrators who do not provide in-classroom support.
- **Funeral services:** This group includes licensed staff and active apprentices in the funeral services industry. There are approximately 3,600 eligible Ohioans in this category.
  - Embalmers/morticians.
  - Funeral home directors.
  - Crematory operators.
  - Apprentices.
- **Law enforcement and corrections officers:** There are approximately 76,000 Ohioans eligible in this category.
  - This group includes sworn law enforcement officers and peace officers who have first responder or direct supervisory responsibilities. These individuals must be active duty, working a regular minimum of 20 hours a week. Eligibility does not include retired, "special," or reserve officers.
    - Police officers.
    - Sheriff's deputies.
    - Ohio State Highway Patrol troopers.

- **Special jurisdiction officers:** Other state or federal enforcement officers such as Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) enforcement staff, pharmacy board investigators, BCI agents, state fire marshal investigators, federal transportation security officers, and other federal law enforcement officers who do not have access to vaccination from federal sources.
- **Corrections staff:** Eligible are corrections staff, including probation and parole staff, who provide direct services to an adult or juvenile inmate or court-supervised individuals.
- **Firefighters:** Individuals who have a valid active firefighting certificate in the State of Ohio who are active members or employees of a recognized fire department. This does not include retired, emeritus or reserve individuals.

## **Phase 1D**

Vaccinations for Phase 1D will begin on Thursday, March 11, 2021. This phase includes:

- Individuals who have specified medical conditions that may increase their risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19. The new qualifying conditions are not already covered through Ohio's age-based approach to vaccine eligibility.
- Eligible individuals can receive a vaccine from the provider of their choice. Individuals may be asked to confirm during the registration or screening process that they are eligible to receive the vaccine based on a qualifying medical condition.

### **MEDICAL CONDITIONS**

- People with type 2 diabetes under the age of 50.
  - This opens eligibility to approximately **172,000 Ohioans**.
- People with end-stage renal disease (also known as end-stage kidney disease) under the age of 50.
  - This opens eligibility to approximately **25,000 Ohioans**.

## **Phase 2A**

Vaccinations for Phase 2A began on March 4, extending age eligibility criteria to age 60 and older. Because the risk of more severe reactions and outcomes of COVID-19 increases with age, Phase 2A opened with vaccinations based on age. This opens eligibility to approximately **695,000 additional Ohioans**. Eligible individuals can receive a vaccine from the provider of their choice.

### **AGE ELIGIBILITY**

- Individuals age 60 and older.

Individuals age 65 and older previously eligible under Phase 1B who have not yet received the vaccine remain eligible under Phase 2A.

## **Phase 2B**

Vaccinations for Phase 2B will begin on Thursday, March 11, extending age eligibility criteria to age 50 and older. Because the risk of more severe reactions and outcomes of COVID-19 increases with age, Phase 2B is opening with vaccinations based on age, extending eligibility criteria to age 50 and older. This opens eligibility to approximately **1.2 million Ohioans**. Eligible individuals can receive a vaccine from the provider of their choice.

### **AGE ELIGIBILITY**

- Individuals age 50 and older.

Individuals age 60 and older previously eligible under Phase 1B or Phase 2A who have not yet received the vaccine remain eligible under Phase 2B.

## **Manufacturer specific vaccine eligibility requirements**

Vaccine recipients must be age 16 or older to be eligible for the Pfizer vaccine, and age 18 or older to be eligible for the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccines.

## **How to find vaccine providers, schedule appointments**

Ohioans can find providers participating in Ohio's Vaccine Program the following ways:

- [Vaccine Management Solution \(VMS\)](#) – This one-stop solution for patients beginning the vaccination process will allow Ohioans to determine eligibility, schedule appointments, submit health information, and receive updates and reminders. Visit [gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov). Find frequently asked questions, facts and training materials on the [Get the Shot page](#) at [coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://coronavirus.ohio.gov).
- The **COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Locations** directory at [vaccine.coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://vaccine.coronavirus.ohio.gov) is a resource that shows providers who have received shipments of COVID-19 vaccines. The COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Locations directory is searchable by county and ZIP code.
- In addition, vaccine supply is also available through the [Federal Retail Pharmacy Program for COVID-19 Vaccination](#). Eligible Ohioans who want to find a participating pharmacy should visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [VaccineFinder](#). This is a free, online service.

*Updated March 8, 2021.*

For additional information, visit [coronavirus.ohio.gov](http://coronavirus.ohio.gov).

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

**Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call the COVID-19 CareLine at 1-800-720-9616.**