



# MASSACHUSETTS COVID-19 VACCINE PROGRAM

## Frequently Asked Questions: Phase 2, Certain Workers March 16, 2021

As of March 22, workers in certain occupation groups will be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine. Please see below responses to common questions about this announcement. For more information about COVID-19 vaccination in Massachusetts, please visit [COVID-19 Vaccine | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-vaccine).

### Who is included in this phase?

- Restaurant or cafe workers
- Food, meatpacking, beverage, agriculture, consumer goods, retail, or food service workers
- Grocery and convenience store workers
- Food pantry workers or volunteers
- Medical supply chain workers
- Vaccine development workers
- Transit/transportation workers
- Public works, water, wastewater, or utility workers
- Sanitation workers
- Public health workers
- Court system worker (judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, clerks), other than court officers who are listed under first responders
- Funeral directors and funeral workers

Visit the website for additional information, including definitions and examples of each worker category: [COVID-19 vaccinations for certain workers | Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-vaccinations-for-certain-workers). If your job does not align with one of the listed worker groups, you are eligible to receive the vaccine beginning April 19, 2021.

### How are medical supply workers defined?

This group includes workers at manufacturers (including biotechnology companies and those companies that have shifted production to medical supplies), materials and parts suppliers, technicians, logistics and warehouse operators, printers, packagers, distributors of medical products and equipment (including third party logistics providers, and those who test and repair), personal protective equipment (PPE), isolation barriers, medical gases, pharmaceuticals (including materials used in radioactive drugs), dietary supplements, commercial health products, blood and blood products, vaccines, testing materials, laboratory supplies, cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting or sterilization supplies (including dispensers), sanitary goods, personal care products, pest control products, and tissue and paper towel products.

### Do I need to prove that I am eligible in this group?

You will need to confirm that you are eligible (called “attesting”) by signing a form. The form will be available for you to sign either when booking an appointment online or when you arrive in-person at your appointment. No additional proof is needed, and you will not need to show identification from

your place of employment. You can get a vaccine even if you do not have insurance, a driver's license, or a Social Security number.

### **When can I get my vaccine?**

We currently have a very limited supply of vaccines. This means not everyone who is eligible will be able to get the vaccine right away. It could take a month for all eligible residents to secure a first appointment.

People who live, work, or study in Massachusetts should [preregister](#) for a COVID-19 vaccine appointment at a mass vaccination location: Fenway Park, Gillette Stadium, Reggie Lewis Center, DoubleTree Hotel-Danvers, Eastfield Mall-Springfield, Natick Mall, and former Circuit City-Dartmouth.

### **Where can I get vaccinated?**

There are several locations where individuals may receive vaccinations, including mass vaccination sites, pharmacies, certain health care offices, and community vaccination clinics operated by local boards of health. For a list of all locations, visit [COVID-19 vaccination locations | Mass.gov](#).

### **What do I need for my vaccine appointment? What if I don't have an ID?**

You can receive the COVID-19 vaccine without insurance or an ID.

Your vaccination location may list the below items as necessary, however, that only applies to people who have them.

- Bring an ID with your name, if you have one, to verify your name in the vaccination system.
- Bring your health insurance card, if you have one. Your insurance will be billed at no cost to you. You do not need to be insured to receive the vaccine.

You will never be asked for a credit card number or any other form of payment for the vaccine.

### **How much will the COVID-19 vaccine cost?**

The vaccine is free of charge to you. If you have insurance, it will be billed, but your insurance company will not ask for any out-of-pocket or copay charges from you. You are also able to receive the vaccine if you do not have insurance.

Vaccination locations cannot charge you a fee for getting the vaccine. You will never be asked for a credit card number or any other form of payment for the vaccine.

### **Is there transportation available for my appointment?**

Some health insurers, including MassHealth, can help arrange transportation to your vaccine appointment. There also may be local community organizations, such as Aging Services Access Points (ASAPs) and Councils on Aging (COAs) that can assist you in finding transportation.

### **How long will the appointment take?**

Once you receive the vaccine, a health care provider at the site will monitor you for any reactions you may have after getting vaccinated. They will watch you for at least 15 minutes after the injection (or for 30 minutes if you have a history of allergic reaction of any severity to a vaccine or injectable therapy).

### **Will appointments be available after normal business hours and on weekends?**

We are working to expand the number of appointments as well as the times and days of the week. Please continue to check <https://vaxfinder.mass.gov/> for available appointments.

**Are walk-in appointments available?**

At this time, walk-in appointments are not available.

**Is information about scheduling the vaccine available in languages other than English?**

The Massachusetts Vaccine Scheduling Resource Line (2-1-1) is available in English and Spanish and will have interpreters available to support individuals in 100 additional languages.

**Am I required to receive the vaccine?**

No. The COVID-19 vaccine is voluntary. The COVID-19 vaccine has been shown to be highly effective at preventing illness, hospitalization and death and it is an important tool in the fight against the pandemic.

**Will employers be able to hold vaccination clinics?**

At this time, the Commonwealth does not receive sufficient vaccine supply from the federal government to support an employer-based vaccine program. Based upon federal supply projections, the Commonwealth had hoped and planned to allow companies to participate. However, we now ask the business community to hold off on efforts to set up employer-based vaccination clinics.

**As an employer, how can I support my employees in getting the vaccine?**

Employers can support employees in getting the vaccine in several ways:

- 1) Communicate information on benefits and safety of vaccine to employees and the surrounding community. Education and outreach materials are available in 10 languages and can be downloaded from [Stop COVID-19 – Vaccine education and outreach materials | Mass.gov](#).
- 2) Invite a DPH vaccine ambassador to a meeting with your employees to share information about the safety and development of the vaccine. Ambassadors are not necessarily vaccine experts or clinicians; they are public health professionals with experience in community settings. They can speak, answer questions, or listen to feedback to share with DPH. To invite a DPH ambassador to your forum, please email Miguel at [miguel.arrechea@mass.gov](mailto:miguel.arrechea@mass.gov) with the following information:
  - Date, time, and audience of the forum
  - Desired role for the ambassador
  - Language capacity or other important considerations

If possible, please request an ambassador at least two weeks before your forum. DPH will make every effort to fulfill requests.

- 3) Encourage employees, when eligible, to receive the vaccine. Communicate to employees when they are eligible. Employees who are eligible for the vaccine will likely need to go on their own time. If operationally feasible, they may request time off and use personal, vacation or sick accruals, similar to other medical appointments, per workplace policy.

**What should I do if I experience symptoms after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine?**

Some people have side effects after being vaccinated (such as tiredness, headache, and pain at the injection site), which are normal signs that your body is building protection. These side effects may affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days. If you develop respiratory

symptoms like runny nose, cough, or loss of sense of smell or taste, these are not side effects of the vaccine and you should consider getting tested for COVID-19 or talk to your healthcare provider. It is possible to get COVID-19 even after you get the vaccine. Stay home if you are sick and avoid close contact with others. You may wish to check with your employer about how this will impact your work.

### **Where can I learn more about vaccine safety?**

The COVID-19 vaccines are safe. The available COVID-19 vaccines are approved and recommended by the FDA and the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices following standard testing and approval processes. Vaccines undergo rigorous testing and large clinical trials before they are approved for widespread use. Vaccination is the best protection to reduce the risk of severe illness due to COVID-19. Getting vaccinated may also protect others around you who have not yet received the vaccine.

The vaccine is proven to be extremely effective, but it's important for all residents to continue to practice prevention (social distance, wear a mask). While the vaccines have been shown to be effective in helping the person vaccinated not get seriously ill from COVID-19, they have not yet been proven to reduce that person's ability to transmit COVID-19 to others. Continue to social distance, wear a mask, avoid groups and stay home if you feel sick.

If you have any concerns about getting the vaccine due to a medical condition, please discuss these concerns with your primary care physician. For more information on COVID-19 vaccine safety visit [www.mass.gov/COVIDVaccineSafety](http://www.mass.gov/COVIDVaccineSafety).

Information on the COVID-19 vaccine will be updated regularly. Please also use the following resources:

- [COVID-19 Vaccine Information in Massachusetts](#)
- [Latest COVID-19 Vaccine Updates in Massachusetts](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Timeline and Eligibility](#)
- [Current COVID-19 Vaccine Locations](#)
- [Massachusetts COVID-19 Vaccination Program \(MCVP\)](#)
- [Information for staff and residents of long term care facilities, ALRs and Rest Homes](#)
- [Information for residents and staff of affordable senior housing](#)
- [Information for home-based health care workers](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Safety](#)
- [Sign-up for COVID-19 Alerts](#)