COVID-19 Vaccination Administration

Frequently Asked Questions

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Clinic

Access/ Registration in VAMS

What end date should be entered into VAMS for Clinics?

Currently, there is no specific end date for you to enter. It should be far enough out to allow scheduling of vaccination appointments to continue.

Is there a timeline for when hospitals will receive access to VAMS?

All phase 1 providers that are not reporting to CT WiZ through an HL7 interface need to use VAMS. This includes hospitals, local health departments, pharmacies, and urgent care centers that will be enrolling to participate in phase 1 response. The Clinic Point of Contact (POC) as indicated in section B on the COVID-19 Agreement will receive an e-mail to complete the registration of the hospital and also receive an e-mail invitation for VAMS clinic User Training, conducted by CDC VAMS.

How do I know which staff should have roles in VAMS?

We have provided a Roles and Responsibilities Sheet on our COVID-19 Vaccine Providers webpage to help with adding staff to VAMS. A staff member can be assigned multiple roles.

EHR Interface

We are live with the IIS Registry with Bi-Directional Query to our EHR. Is data from VAMS going to flow via the same interface?

No, there is no interface between VAMS and the IIS. You will have to manually enter the vaccination in your EHR as well.

If we are going to be using our EHR, do we need VAMS to order our vaccine? Do we only order through VAMS for Phase 1 and not CT WiZ?

All phase 1 providers that are not reporting to CT WiZ through an HL7 interface need to use VAMS for ordering vaccines and reporting doses administered. This includes hospitals, local health departments, pharmacies, and urgent care centers that will be enrolling to participate in phase 1 response.

How will clinics that use an EHR schedule appointments for recipients that are in VAMS?

If the clinic uses VAMS, they will use it for all the functionality. Employers registered in VAMS add their workforce roster and then VAMS sends an invite to those recipients to schedule appointments at available clinics in VAMS. VAMS sends reminder notifications for the 2nd dose appointments.

My clinic has an EHR, do I need to document the vaccination in VAMS and my EHR?

Yes, you will need to manually enter the vaccination into VAMS and then into your EHR. You can save time in VAMS by using a 2D barcode scanner to scan the recipient's QR code to check them in for their appointment, scan the vaccine vial to add to your inventory and scan the vaccine vial to document the vaccine used for administration.

Recipient Check In

Can the "greeter" scan the consent form bar code to check the recipient in?

The greeter can scan the QR code the recipient provides, either in their email or on their phone. The greeter can also manually check the recipient in.

Are the recipient's demographics uploaded into CT WiZ and we log the vaccination there?

Demographics and medical information can be seen in VAMS. The Healthcare professional will document the vaccination in VAMS. You can scan the vial to document the vaccine or manually enter it.

What do we do if a person does not complete their consent form in VAMS? Can we give them a blank consent form to complete?

The consent form must be completed in the VAMS system to check the recipient in and continue with the vaccination. If the person shows up for the appointment without the consent form completed, they will have to log into their account to complete the consent.

Can a clinic conduct onsite registration for COVID-19 vaccination?

Clinics can only create a walk-in appointment for recipients who have previously registered in VAMS. When a clinic creates a walk-in appointment, the recipient will receive an e-mail/text to complete the medical questionnaire/consent. Recipients cannot get checked in for their appointment without the consent completed.

Running Reports in VAMS

Can I receive a daily report of completed vaccinations?

Currently, you cannot run a report of your completed vaccinations. You can view your current and future appointments and your on-hand inventory.

Does VAMS allow for extraction of data for Clinics or Organization/Employers (i.e. hospitals)?

VAMS has a dashboard to view data but not extract reports.

Scheduling

How can a Clinic Point of Contact review past appointments?

At this time, Clinic Staff can only see upcoming/open appointments.

Can a clinic determine the length of each vaccination slot?

The Clinic Administrator creates the clinic's main operating schedule which includes selecting the length of the time slot (10, 15, 20, 30 mins.). When they create the vaccination treatment stations with operating hours (could be different than the main clinic's hours), the number of slots available is based on the hours and number of vaccination stations.

System Questions

Will DPH be supplying scanners to hospitals?

DPH has purchased a limited supply of data loggers and scanners for hospitals. Hospitals can request ultracold dataloggers and barcode scanners if they need them. Please send an email to DPH.Immunizations@ct.gov to request one.

Are you able to bypass the QR code if it does not scan?

If the QR does not scan, you can manually check in the recipient.

What happens if the system is down during clinic hours?

Currently, VAMS does not function offline. CDC recommends your jurisdiction develop and test backup solutions for offline use if the internet is unavailable and explore methods for sending second-dose reminders to vaccine recipients as needed. Recommended activities include:

- Print consent forms, schedules, information sheets, and administration checklists.
- Plan for data entry after clinic operating hours.
- Monitor recipient records to recognize when recipients may need an offline second-dose reminder notification.

Is the Vaccine Finder portal in VAMS?

No, the Vaccine Finder portal is a separate portal that you need an account for. You need to report your inventory in Vaccine Finder daily.

Is uploaded information done through SFTP or data file? How is the data protected?

VAMS is a secure web-based platform with direct data entry for COVID-19 Phase 1. Clinics can use a 2d barcode scanner to save time adding vaccine inventory and recording a recipient's vaccination. User access is approved by the CT DPH upon approval of the COVID-19 Provider Agreement.

There is no electronic interface or SFTP with VAMS to report vaccine administration. It is direct data entry, and the users get access to VAMS after the COVID-19 Provider Enrollment/Agreement is completed and approved in CT WiZ.

Employers can either manually enter or upload a roster of their vaccine "Recipients" into VAMS who will receive an e-mail to register in VAMS and schedule their appointments at Clinics. To upload a roster via a .csv file via a bulk upload, view the instructions in the VAMS Employer User Guide.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the IZ Gateway?

IZ Gateway is the secure transport hub from CDC's Vaccine Administration System (VAMS) to CT WiZ. This Gateway has been used for several years for interjurisdictional exchange between Immunization Information Systems (such as CT WiZ). DPH has a signed DUA between the IZ Gateway and CT WiZ. Clinics who do not report directly into CT WiZ will report to VAMS to report COVID-19 for Phase 1.

Vaccine Administration

Does VAMS include reporting of adverse events that result from the vaccine or are associated with it?

You need to report your adverse events in the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS).

Does VAMS have the ability for co-signature by a supervisor for nursing students that as serving as vaccinators?

Each vaccinator must be added to VAMS as a Clinic Healthcare Professional. A note can be added to the record for the supervisor to sign off.

What if the recipient does not meet the medical screening criteria?

In VAMS at time of the vaccine administration, Healthcare Professionals are required to respond to questions used to assess the recipient's condition. If either question is answered 'No' the recipient is ineligible for the vaccination and a reschedule prompt will be sent to the recipient's e-mail.

What if the vaccination was not successful?

At the time of vaccine administration, Healthcare Professionals will have the ability to select a reason that a vaccination was unsuccessful. If applicable, recipients will receive an e-mail to reschedule.

Can I log a vaccine refusal?

There is no specific place in VAMS to log a vaccine refusal; however, you can document whether the recipient is eligible to receive the vaccine based on the medical questionnaire. If the recipient is not eligible to receive the vaccination at the appointment, the recipient can reschedule their appointment. A wastage can also be recorded in VAMS for situations such as "vaccine drawn into syringe, but not administered" if the recipient were to refuse after the vaccine was prepared.

If a recipient shows up in the emergency room, how can the hospital clinic know the recipient's vaccination status?

Clinics will know the recipient's record by checking VAMS or by logging into CT WiZ or by having the recipient bring their immunization record.

Recipients can obtain their immunization record from VAMS or from CT WiZ.

Frequently Asked Questions

Vaccine Inventory

Does each campus in a Clinic system place an order (even though they are shipped to one central location)?

It depends on how the COVID-19 Vaccination Program Agreement was completed for who is ordering vaccines for each campus. The shipment will go to the central location for disbursement.

How do 2d barcode scanners work?

2d barcode scanners allow users to scan vaccine information into VAMS. Users can scan a vaccine vial to add inventory or log a vaccination on a patient's record. Scanning barcodes saves time and reduces manual data entry errors.

Is there a preferred QR or 2d barcode scanner that VAMS recommends?

There is not a preferred scanner. There is a document about 2d barcode scanners on our website at: [COVID-19 Vaccine Providers (ct.gov)](#)

How do I know when my order is approved?

You can view the status of your order by viewing your notes on the request. The Immunization Program will communicate with you through notes about your order.

How will I know if the amount I ordered has been changed?

You would receive a communication in VAMS from the Immunization Program if your order changed. Please click on the "Follow" button which will enable you to receive e-mail notifications when the Immunization Program makes changes.

Organization/Employer

Access to VAMS

Who are Organization/Employers in VAMS?

Healthcare providers who have employees that meet the vaccination criteria for Phase 1.

How do Organization/Employer users get access to VAMS? If it is a website, can it be locked down to our environment?

Our jurisdiction, CT DPH Team, loads the organization/employer into VAMS. An e-mail is sent to invite the Employer Point of Contact to complete their registration in VAMS.

VAMS is a web-based application available on any device with internet.

We are gathering contact information about our critical workforce. What type of file is appropriate to upload in VAMS, or is this something that needs to be done manually?

Employees can be added one at a time or via bulk upload by importing a list of names. The employees first name, last name and e-mail are needed. A .csv file must be used for a bulk upload. Further information on the bulk upload file is available in the Organization/Employer training manual found on the COVID-19 Vaccine Providers webpage.

Employee Information

Do Organization/Employers have to obtain informed consent from employees before administering the vaccine?

The recipient must complete the medical questionnaire and consent in VAMS prior to the appointment. The recipient cannot be checked in for their appointment if these are not completed.

How do health care workers who do not have email access register for their vaccination? Do you need an email address to schedule your appointment in VAMS?

An email is required to register in VAMS and complete the prescreening. However, the recipient then can choose text as a preferred method of contact for appointment notifications.

Is there a way to prioritize the critical workforce in VAMS so that the most at-risk workers get priority with limited allotment? Ex: Patrol men may have higher risk then police chief.

In VAMS, employer coordinators only enter the employees first name, last name, and email when adding recipients (manually or bulk upload). The employers will have to prioritize their workforce prior to entering them into VAMS as the recipients will receive an email to register in VAMS and schedule their appointment.

How does an Organization/Employer (Clinic i.e., Hospital) know who should be vaccinated for Phase 1A?

When an Organization/Employer sets up the roster of recipients for Phase 1A it is based on ACIP recommendations. CT DPH will share guidance on which recipients fall under this Phase 1A.

When the recipient is completing their registration/consent, they will set that up in VAMS prior to getting vaccinated. It will include a question on 'critical workforce and role' for the clinic to review.

Scheduling Employees

How can we limit employees to ONLY schedule appointments at one of our specific clinic locations?

When recipients (employees) are uploaded into VAMS by their Organization/Employer, they receive an email from VAMS to register and are given a choice of clinics in their area to schedule a vaccination

appointment at. You would need to communicate with your employees to only select your clinic to schedule the appointment.

An alternative would be to set up your clinic as a third-party clinic. The Clinic Administrator or healthcare professional will serve as the third party to vaccine recipients. Recipients will not be creating accounts, recording their medical history, or scheduling their appointments in VAMS. This will be done by the Clinic Administrator or Healthcare Professional. You would need to communicate to your employees when they should be vaccinated.

Recipient Information

Employee (Recipient) Enrollment and Scheduling

Will recipients be able to schedule an appointment in VAMS for their vaccine?

The recipient appointment scheduling starts with the Organization/Employer adding the recipients into VAMS. At that time, the recipients will receive an e-mail to complete their registration (choosing text or e-mail for notifications) and then schedule their appointment in VAMS. They can search for clinics providing the vaccine using their Zip Code or city and select an available timeslot. After they schedule their appointment, a 2nd text/e-mail is sent to them to complete the medical questionnaire and consent form.

Recipient Communication/Forms

Can a recipient schedule their appointment if they have not completed the prescreening?

No, they cannot. They must first complete the prescreen which will then lead them to schedule an appointment. After they schedule their appointment they will need to log back in and complete their medical questionnaire and consent.

What if the recipients don't have computer/smartphone access? Is there someone to help people with language barriers?

VAMS is only available in the English language for now. Organizations and Employers should not create the online pre-vaccination for recipients who do not have access to computers or smartphones.

However, there are clinics who can be set up as 'Third Party Clinics' to document the recipient's vaccination. They can provide the necessary documents to the recipient prior to the appointment.

Will there be a Vaccine Information Sheet for COVID-19 Vaccine with any contraindications listed or is that part of the prescreen questions?

The Vaccine Information Sheet is available in VAMS when completing the medical questionnaire and consent.

Frequently Asked Questions

Does VAMS provide automatic reminders for the second dose to recipients?

There is a text/e-mail notification sent when the 1st vaccination dose is completed. The next dose eligible date and a link back to VAMS to schedule their 2nd appointment is included in the notification. The recipient can schedule their 2nd dose at this time.

Is there a registration consent form built into VAMS?

Yes. The title screen is Vaccine Consent for (patient name). At the bottom of the screen, the check box reads the following "I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Notice of Privacy Practices".

Will VAMS provide each vaccine recipient with an e-mail verification of vaccination?

Yes, after the vaccination appointment, the vaccine recipient is sent a notification (email/text) of their vaccine completion and the next dose eligible date. They can print their vaccination certificate from VAMS and schedule their next appointment.

What if the recipient misses their scheduled appointment, does the recipient receive a follow-up text/e-mail?

Yes, the recipient receives a cancellation notification at 6pm on the day of the appointment and another notification 2 days later indicating the appointment was cancelled and to reschedule.

Does the recipient receive a reminder text/e-mail of an upcoming appointment?

The day before the appointment, the recipient receives a reminder e-mail to complete the questionnaire/consent. The recipient cannot check in for their appointment until they complete this.

How do I cancel and reschedule my appointment?

The recipient can log into their VAMS account and cancel and reschedule their appointment.

General System Questions

What security protocols are in place in VAMS?

VAMS is a secure web-based platform, following national guidelines for security of the data. Data Use Agreements (DUA) have been signed with each jurisdiction (i.e. CT DPH) to ensure security and confidentiality of the data.

Is VAMS compatible with Google Chromebooks?

Yes, VAMS is a web-based application that is compatible on any device with internet.

What browsers are compatible with VAMS?

VAMS is only compatible with the most current stable versions of Edge, Chrome, Mozilla, Firefox and Safari.

Frequently Asked Questions

Has VAMS been tested with high volume data entry? Is there a paper backup plan in the event VAMS goes down?

Currently, VAMS does not function offline. CDC recommends your jurisdiction develop and test backup solutions for offline use if the internet is unavailable and explore methods for sending second-dose reminders to vaccine recipients as needed. Recommended activities include:

• Print consent forms, schedules, information sheets, and administration checklists.

• Plan for data entry after clinic operating hours.

• Monitor recipient records to recognize when recipients may need an offline second-dose reminder notification.