

From: CT Department of Public Health <noreply-dphimmunizations@ct.gov>

Sent: Monday, May 3, 2021 3:36 PM

Subject: COVID Vaccine Provider Bulletin Week of May 3, 2021



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Dear Connecticut COVID-19 Vaccine Providers,

Thank you again for your continued efforts in the COVID Vaccine roll-out. This email contains important information for COVID vaccine providers – please read this message in its entirety.

Monitoring COVID Vaccine Expiration Dates

Providers should make sure to continue to monitor expiration dates for COVID-19 vaccines. Specifically, providers are encouraged to check the expiration dates for J&J vaccines and ensure they are administering vaccine on a “first in first out” out basis to avoid expiration, as many lots of the J&J vaccine have expiration dates that are sooner than those on the mRNA vaccines. Please report vaccines due to expire within 30 days to the COVID-19 vaccine [ordering portal](#) so we can facilitate potential transfer of the vaccine to another CoVP Provider to avoid wastage. Please report this information to the ordering portal even if you are not placing an order on that particular week.

Information on how to determine the expiration data is available for each vaccine below.

[Janssen](#): The expiration date is NOT printed on the vaccine vial or carton. To determine the expiration date: Scan the QR code on the outer carton, or call 1-800-565-4008, or visit www.vaxcheck.jnj.

[Pfizer](#): Use CDC’s beyond-use date labels for this vaccine to track storage time at refrigerated and frozen temperatures.

[Moderna](#): Scan the QR code on the vial or carton, enter the lot number, and the expiration date will be displayed, or visit [http:// www.modernatx.com/covid19vaccine-eua](http://www.modernatx.com/covid19vaccine-eua).

National Guard deployments

Please note that all National Guard deployments to support vaccine sites will be winding down by May 31. The vast majority of COVID Vaccine Providers use no national guard members or, where national guard members have been deployed, have transitioned to in-house staffing models. Providers who still have national guard members deployed should make plans to transition to alternative staffing models no later than May 31.

To assist you, the DPH has compiled multiple options for staffing mass vaccination sites which can be found at: [Staffing Resources for COVID-19 Vaccination Sites \(ct.gov\)](#). The web page is updated regularly. We have heard from many nursing programs across CT, whose students are hungry for field-based experience. Additionally, over 1,600 professionals have been trained to administer COVID-19 vaccines, and there are over 11,000 licensed practitioners who have offered to assist (many for little to no pay). These individuals can assist in vaccinator roles, providing support for medical records or appointments, post-vaccine monitoring, or as greeters/traffic control. Please contact Francesca Provenzano (Francesca.Provenzano@ct.gov) and Bill Gerrish (William.Gerrish@ct.gov) for any questions or support.

COVID-19 vaccine related articles recently published in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report:

- [Updated Recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices for Use of the Janssen \(Johnson & Johnson\) COVID-19 Vaccine After Reports of Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia Syndrome Among Vaccine Recipients — United States, April 2021](#)
- [Safety Monitoring of the Janssen \(Johnson & Johnson\) COVID-19 Vaccine — United States, March–April 2021](#)
- [Anxiety-Related Adverse Event Clusters After Janssen COVID-19 Vaccination — Five U.S. Mass Vaccination Sites, April 2021](#)
- [Effectiveness of Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna Vaccines Against COVID-19 Among Hospitalized Adults Aged \$\geq 65\$ Years — United States, January–March 2021](#)

Moderna vaccine: new 15 dose vials and storage and handling updates

The Moderna vaccine will be available in two different vials by early May: the current maximum 11 dose vial and a new maximum 15 dose vial. **The vial will remain the same size but will be filled to the higher volume.**

- A new NDC has been issued for the larger volume Moderna vial, which has been given a range of 13-15 doses in the EUA.
- Moderna is planning to transition all manufacturing to the new vial during the month of May. During the month, providers may receive vaccines that include vials of either quantity.
- The larger volume vial may contain 15 doses of vaccine. However, it will not always be possible to extract the 15th dose. This is based on the overfill in the vial and the type of syringes used to administer the vaccine. Therefore, vaccination providers should expect to withdraw 13-15 doses from each vial.
- Each dose must contain 0.5mL of vaccine.
- When the amount of vaccine remaining in the vial is not a complete 0.5mL dose, discard the vial and the residual vaccine regardless of the number of doses

withdrawn. Do NOT save vials to combine residual vaccine from more than one vial to get a complete dose. An unextracted 15th dose does NOT count as waste.

- Vaccination sites should continue to reliably extract 10 doses from the current volume vial and plan to extract 14 doses from the new larger volume vial using the ancillary kit supplies provided.
- Inability to draw 14 or fewer doses from a 15 dose vial should be reported as wastage (please report through submitting a ticket to [Helpdesk](#)).
- Ancillary kits will be reconfigured to extract 14 doses per vial, plus a 5% surplus to account for damage, wastage, or additional doses.

Moderna updates to storage and handling

- Frozen Vaccine Moderna vials can now be stored frozen between -50° to -15°C (-58° to 5°F). This is an increased range from the original temperatures. This new, wider temperature range is consistent with temperature requirements for other recommended vaccines stored in the freezer.
- Vials may be stored between 8° to 25°C (46° to 77°F) for a total of 24 hours. This is an increase from 12 hours.
- Punctured vials may be held between 2° to 25°C (36° to 77°F) for up to 12 hours. Vials should be discarded 12 hours after the first puncture. This is an increase from 6 hours.

REMINDERS

- The updated [Fact Sheet for Recipients and Caregivers](#) (rev 4/23/2021) should be furnished to all vaccine recipients.
- Providers are reminded that the type of vaccine on offer should be transparent to the patient at the time of scheduling. Individuals who do not find the type of vaccine they prefer at a site should be provided with resources for how to schedule at a site with their preferred vaccine type. Patients can be directed to covidvaccinefinder.ct.gov to locate sites based on vaccine type.
- Janssen vaccine may again be used by hospitals discharging patients to skilled nursing facilities and assisted living facilities, as well as other settings depending upon available supplies.
- Please continue to encourage patients to register for [V-safe](#); report adverse events to [VAERS](#).

Provider mobile capacity survey

We are still seeking providers to support outreach and access efforts across the State by offering on-site clinics with organizations, community groups, and employers. Providers who

would like to be included in DPH's roster of providers that could be "matched" to such opportunities should complete the mobile capacity survey, if they have not already done so. [Please click here to complete the mobile capacity survey.](#)

High school clinics

School leaders and local health directors are encouraged to coordinate with CoVP providers to arrange Pfizer vaccine clinics for eligible students (age 16+). High school clinics will take different forms depending on the local context: in some cases, on-site clinics are being planned at each high school led by the local health department; in others, a vaccine provider will be offering dedicated clinics for these students at a central location. Each district can define its own model and we will be here to support.

If you would like help matching your school(s) with a CoVP provider and arranging student vaccine clinics — or if you have questions regarding how to effectively communicate with students and families to ensure maximum coverage — please reach out to Cameron Cross at: Cameron.Cross@ct.gov.

Avoiding vaccine wastage

Several CoVP providers have contacted us with concerns over potentially wasting COVID-19 vaccines should they puncture a vial and not be able to use each dose within the needed timeframe.

While vaccinators should still do their utmost to avoid vaccine wastage, concerns about wastage should not be a barrier to providing COVID-19 vaccines to willing recipients presenting for appointments or walk-ups.

Please continue to use creative strategies to avoid wastage, such as shared waitlists, phoning or texting those with appointments in coming days to present early, actively inviting in individuals who are in the vicinity (e.g., some providers have made PA announcements for grocery store-located pharmacies), etc. Continue to report vaccine wastage to the DPH [Helpdesk](#).

Residency requirement update

Given the new phase of roll-out and a desire to increase access, providers are no longer required to confirm Connecticut residency status during vaccine appointments or scheduling. We hope this will reduce the identification and verification burden at clinic sites and ensure that clinics are welcoming to all.

In addition, providers who have patients from outside of Connecticut are able to invite those patients in for vaccination at their clinics.

Second dose follow-up

Thank you to all providers for scheduling second doses at the time of the first dose and for conducting active follow up of patients overdue for second doses. Providers are asked to abide by the following procedures:

- At least three different contact attempts should be made with patients before considering them lost to follow up
- Contact attempts should include multiple different media. For example, phone call, text and email
- The [second dose scheduling policy](#) has been updated as of April 19th to reflect the changes to provider ordering of both first and second doses.

DPH is monitoring second timeliness and completion rates by provider and will be following up with providers who are lagging on second dose completion.

Check your listing

Providers are reminded to check their listing at covidvaccinefinder.ct.gov. If any corrections are needed, please email Caroline.Hou@ct.gov.

In addition, providers offering walk-up appointments should also email Caroline to be included in marketing and promotion of walk-up appointments. Provider locations with walk up appointments are listed at ct.gov/covidvaccine/walkup.

Upcoming Clinic Trainings and Office Hours

Weekly CoVP Update

- Provides CoVP Vaccinating Providers updates on the CoVP Program and Q&A with DPH staff. **Wednesdays** 9:00am-10:00am; Join: [CoVP Office Hours](#)

CoVP CT WiZ Enrollment Office Hours

- Provides information about the CoVP enrollment process in CT WiZ and Q&A with DPH staff. **Mondays & Thursdays** 12:00pm-12:30pm; Join: [CoVP CT WiZ Enrollment Office Hours](#)

Vaccine Storage and Handling Assessment

- For clinics who completed CoVP enrollment and received an invite to attend. **Tuesdays & Thursdays** 10:00am-11:00am and 1:00pm-2:00pm; By invitation Only

VAMS Live Helpdesk Office Hours

- Clinics can ask questions about VAMS functionality to DPH staff. **Tuesdays** – 9:00am 10:00am (*NEW Hours*) and **Thursdays** – 1:00pm – 2:00pm (*NEW Hours*); Join: [VAMS Live Helpdesk Office Hours](#)

Visit: [VAMS Training \(ct.gov\)](#) and [CT WiZ Training](#) for VAMS enhancement release notes and training materials on VAMS and CT WiZ.

Does your clinic need training support on new enhancements including the latest VAMS 4.0 that went live 5/2/21?

- Please complete this very brief **Clinic Training Survey**: <https://form.jotform.com/211024658456152> In only a few minutes, you can help us tailor your future trainings/support. *Thank you!*

Find all the latest information about COVID-19 vaccine distribution in Connecticut on the [COVID-19 Vaccine Data Tracker](#).

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