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Subject: COVID-19 Vaccine Program (CoVP) Provider Bulletin, Week of February 21, 2022



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Dear Connecticut COVID-19 Vaccine Providers,

This communication is being sent to all key contacts at provider organizations administering COVID-19 vaccine— please read this message in its entirety. Please feel free to share it with others in your organization who may benefit from the update. Note that all our communications are archived on our [web site](#).

Thank you for everything that you are doing to continue the roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccine program. Please continue your outreach to parents/individuals age 5 and older and encourage everyone to [stay up-to-date](#) with COVID-19 vaccines.

UPDATES

Young Pediatric Vaccine (age 6 months through 4 years) Rollout

As you are aware, the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) postponed their advisory meeting delaying the previously communicated timeline for the young pediatric (6m-4y) rollout. All provider pre-orders for the Pfizer Maroon Cap vaccine have been cancelled by CDC. There is no action required by providers. When the Maroon Cap vaccine becomes available to order again, we will send out a communication and a new order form.

CDC COCA Call: Updated Guidance for Clinicians on COVID-19 Vaccines February 24, 2022, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM ET Call Details [here](#).

During this COCA Call, CDC experts will present updated recommendations on COVID-19 vaccines for people who are moderately or severely immunocompromised. Additionally, presenters will provide simplified recommendations for vaccination following receipt of passive antibody therapy, and summarized recommendations for COVID-19 vaccination by age group.

Updated Clinical Guidance

Pediatric Needle Usage:

- The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (**ACIP**) **recommends using a 1-inch needle for children 1 year of age and older** when administering vaccines to ensure the vaccine is deposited well into the muscle tissue. A 5/8-inch needle may be used in some circumstances if the skin is stretched tightly, and subcutaneous tissues are not bunched.

- HCP should use professional judgement and for the rare situations in which a 5/8-inch needle is required, one can be obtained from the facility's inventory and replaced with supplies from the ancillary supply kits.
- Pediatric COVID-19 Ancillary kits contain only 1-inch needles.
- General Best Practice Guidelines on Immunizations: [ACIP Vaccine Administration Guidelines for Immunization | CDC](#)

COVID-19 Vaccination and Pregnancy

CDC experts discussed the recently published [MMWR](#) last week. Recording and transcript of the CDC telebriefing can be found [here](#). They discussed recent data showing the effectiveness of maternal completion of a 2-dose primary mRNA COVID-19 vaccination series during pregnancy against COVID-19 hospitalization among infants aged <6 months was 61% (95% CI = 31% to 78%).

CDC strongly recommends COVID-19 vaccination either before or during pregnancy because the benefits of vaccination outweigh known or potential risks.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) developed a new COVID-19 patient education video through a cooperative agreement with CDC: [Get Your Recommended COVID-19 Vaccine During Pregnancy](#).

2022 Recommended Adult, Adolescent and Child Immunization Schedules

The 2022 Recommended Immunization Schedules were released last week in two MMWRs:

- [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices Recommended Immunization Schedule for Adults Aged 19 Years or Older—United States, 2022](#)
- [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices Recommended Immunization Schedule for Children and Adolescents Aged 18 Years or Younger—United States, 2022](#)

Despite challenges caused by the pandemic, we must remain vigilant to ensure that children, adolescents, and adults get the vaccines they need to protect against serious and sometimes deadly diseases. **COVID-19 vaccines may be administered without regard to timing of other vaccines.**

Recent Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWRs)

- Pediatric Emergency Department Visits Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, January 2019–January 2022. Link [here](#).
- Effectiveness of Maternal Vaccination with mRNA COVID-19 Vaccine During Pregnancy Against COVID-19–Associated Hospitalization in Infants Aged <6 Months — 17 States, July 2021–January 2022. Link [here](#).

- Hospitalizations of Children and Adolescents with Laboratory-Confirmed COVID-19 — COVID-NET, 14 States, July 2021–January 2022. Link [here](#).
 - *Coinciding with increased circulation of the Omicron variant, COVID-19–associated hospitalization rates among children and adolescents aged 0–17 years increased rapidly in late December 2021, especially among children aged 0–4 years who are not yet eligible for vaccination.*
- Genomic Surveillance for SARS-CoV-2 Variants: Predominance of the Delta (B.1.617.2) and Omicron (B.1.1.529) Variants — United States, June 2021–January 2022. Link [here](#).

REMINDERS

We are keeping information on many important reminders from past communications in the space below. To prevent this section from becoming too lengthy, what remains is selected carefully. All past communications are available [here](#).

<p>Upcoming Clinic Trainings and Office Hours</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CoVP Update -- next meeting this Wednesday February 23 Provides CoVP Vaccinating Providers updates on the CoVP Program and Q&A with DPH staff. Every other Wednesday 9 am; Join: CoVP Update Meeting • The CoVP Enrollment Office Hours Provides information about the CoVP enrollment process in CT WiZ and Q&A with DPH staff. Mondays 12-12:30pm; 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 10-11am and 1-2pm & Thursdays 1-2pm; By invitation Only • VAMS & CT WiZ Live Helpdesk Office Hours Clinics can ask questions about VAMS and CT WiZ functionality to DPH staff. Tuesdays 9-10am; Join: VAMS Live Helpdesk Office Hours <p>Visit: VAMS Training and CT WiZ Training for enhancement release notes and training.</p>
<p>How to update your information in Vaccine Finder/Vaccines.gov</p>	<p>COVID-19 vaccine inventory counts must be reported to Vaccine Finder daily. This is required, regardless of whether your clinic is set as publicly displaying or private.</p> <p>Click here for instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you need to make updates to your primary point of contact for Vaccine Finder: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Please update CT WiZ under: Clinic Tools – Clinic Information – Staff. Include a note in the ‘comments field’ of the update stating this is for a new point of contact for Vaccine Finder. Click here for the CT WiZ training.

- Once completed, a registration link will be sent to the new contact from the CDC. If you do not receive this link, please email CARS_HelpDesk@cdc.gov to request they resend the registration link.
- When the primary vaccine coordinator creates their initial account in Vaccine Finder, they will be asked if they would like to report inventory for 'all clinics' under their organization or to report 'clinics individually.'
- If you select the option to report for 'all clinics' under your organization, only your primary vaccine coordinator contact will receive a registration link.
- If you select the option to report 'individually', your back-up vaccine coordinator will also receive a registration link.

If you choose to publicly display your clinic on Vaccines.gov (*optional*), **please note that the shipping address listed in CT WIZ is what will be displayed on Vaccines.gov** as your clinic location. [Click here](#) for training on how to publicly display your clinic on Vaccines.gov.

COVID-19 Vaccine Administration Information

Updated COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendations

- CDC recommends [Staying Up to Date with vaccines](#) by getting additional doses of vaccine when eligible for optimal protection against COVID-19.
- Individuals are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after they have received the last dose in their primary series.
- [Children ages 5–11 with a weakened immune system](#) can get an *additional dose* (3rd dose) of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine 28 days after their second shot.
- Now [everyone 12 and older should get a booster](#) if they are eligible for the best possible protection against Omicron.
- Anyone who received a [Pfizer or Moderna primary series should get a booster 5 months after their second shot](#).
- [Immunocompromised individuals](#) 5 years and older who completed an mRNA series should receive an mRNA booster **3 months** after their last primary dose—for a total of 4 doses.
- [Immunocompromised individuals](#) 18 years and older who received a single JnJ vaccine should receive one additional mRNA dose and one booster dose (preferably mRNA)—for a total of 3 doses.
 - [Emergency Use Instructions](#)
- [CDC recommends COVID-19 vaccination for all people with a prior SARS-CoV-2 infection](#).
- Anyone who previously received passive COVID-19 antibody products **do not need to wait for any period prior to COVID-19 vaccination**.

Coadministration of COVID-19 and Influenza vaccines	<p>You should administer COVID-19 and influenza vaccines without regard to timing (both live, attenuated and non-live influenza vaccines). This includes administration of COVID-19 and influenza vaccines on the same day, as well as administration at any time interval. (CDC Interim Clinical Considerations: Coadministration of COVID-19 and Influenza vaccines)</p> <p>Tips for Communicating the Benefits of Influenza Vaccine during COVID-19</p>
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COVID-19 Vaccine Product Information

Expiration Extensions	<p>Pfizer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FDA extended shelf-life for Pfizer Pediatric vaccine (Orange cap, 5-11 YO, diluent required) and Adol/Adult Tris (Gray Cap, age 12+, no diluent) to 9 months from date of manufacture when stored in an ultra-cold freezer. This approval may be found at Healthcare Providers for 5-11 years of age, orange cap (must dilute) (fda.gov); Healthcare Providers for 12 years of age and older, gray cap (no dilution) (fda.gov)) and takes effect immediately. This extension applies to frozen (ULT) inventories only. Date of expiration always falls on the last day of the month <p>Moderna</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FDA authorized an extension of the shelf life for certain lots of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. REMEMBER: vials must be maintained in the frozen state for the extension to be applicable (extension does not apply to thawed vials) Look up expiration date by scanning QR code located on the carton or use the company’s expiration date lookup feature on its website. Visit CDC's Vaccine Lot Number and Expiration Date webpage and complete the registration form to request access or contact IISInfo@cdc.gov.
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Report Vaccine Temperature Excursions and Wastage	<p>Report vaccine temperature excursions and vaccines wasted to the Helpdesk by following the prompts and submitting a ticket.</p> <p>When reporting expired doses to the Helpdesk, please select the “Report Vaccine Wastage” ticket option, then select “Other” as the wastage reason and type “Expiration” in the text box when prompted. Please make sure that inventory is updated in Vaccine Finder, VAMS, or CT WiZ as appropriate.</p>
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CT WiZ

CT WiZ Vaccine Inventory Management	<p>CVP Vaccine Inventory Management (ct.gov)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderna Inventory and Booster Adjustments in CT WiZ Moderna Wastage Reporting in CT WiZ
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<p>Ensure Best Practice by Checking CT WiZ Before Vaccinating</p>	<p>Prior to administering any vaccine, including the COVID-19 vaccine, it is important that a recipient’s prior vaccine history be referenced in the Immunization Information System (CT WiZ); best clinical practice is to verify that the recommended interval has elapsed since a previous dose of vaccine and that the preferred brand of vaccine be administered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If your clinic established bi-directional data exchange, you can query CT WiZ for the patient immunization record electronically from your EHR. • Every CoVP enrolled clinic can look up the patient immunization record in the CT WiZ user interface. Those who signed the CoVP Provider Agreement and the primary and back-up vaccine coordinator already have CT WiZ access. • If your staff need access to CT WiZ, request a username and select the ‘Clinic Access’ role. Access to CT WiZ is defined in EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 13C. • If you need support, please submit a Helpdesk ticket.
<p>COVID-19 SMART Health Card</p>	<p>The COVID-19 vaccination record SMART Health Card / QR code is available in the CT WiZ Immunization Information System (IIS) and the CT WiZ Public Portal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recipients can access their own records by using the CT WiZ Public Portal. For security, this public portal uses ‘two-factor authentication’ to verify identify. • If recipients require support with accessing their vaccination record, they can complete the online request form or call our Immunization Program phone 860-509-7929 during business hours. <p>For FAQs, visit: CT WiZ Access My Immunization Record. This webpage has been updated with new FAQs about the SMART Health Card.</p> <p>Tip for Clinics: Ensuring your recipient’s contact information is current at each visit (such as cell phone and email) will be helpful to enable recipients to access their own (or their minor child’s) record in the CT WiZ Public Portal.</p>
<p>Replacement CDC COVID Vaccination Cards</p>	<p><i>Recommendation:</i> Post your procedure for recipients to request replacement cards, in a location visible to recipients at your clinic as well as on your website. If your clinic needs additional CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Cards, contact DPH.Immunizations@ct.gov.</p>
<p>Post Notice to Patients About</p>	<p>All clinics enrolled in the CoVP must post the Notice to Patients About Reporting to CT WiZ, to let vaccine recipients know their</p>

Reporting to CT WiZ at CoVP Clinics

records are being reported to CT WiZ. If you are reporting through VAMS, this data is transmitted to CT WiZ.

CDC Resource Links

COVID-19 clinical materials, including product-specific trainings, guidance and infographics, are here: [COVID-19 Vaccination Clinical and Professional Resources | CDC](#)

COVID-19 Vaccines

- [Different COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- [Quick Reference Guide](#)
- [Product Information Guide for COVID-19 Vaccines and Ancillary Kits/Associated Products](#) (11/3)
- [The Ancillary Redistribution Gadget for Healthcare \(ARGH\) Tool](#) (11/4)

Vaccine Safety

- [Enroll Your Dependent in v-safe](#)
- [COVID-19 Science Brief: Infection vs Vaccine Induced Immunity](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Effectiveness Research](#)

Vaccine Administration

- [Vaccine Administration Resource Library | CDC](#) Includes information Vaccine administration e-learn with CE for pharmacists, infographics for identifying injection sites, short video demonstration injection and holding children.
- [Pink book: Vaccine Administration | CDC](#) includes strategies to decrease anxiety and procedural pain.
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Webinar Series | CDC.](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccines While Pregnant or Breastfeeding](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Shots](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Teens](#)
- [Quick Conversation Guide on COVID-19 Vaccines for Children](#)

- [Resources to Promote the COVID-19 Vaccine for Children & Teens](#)
- [Using the COVID-Vac Tool to Assess Your COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic Staffing and Operations Needs](#)

Thank you for all your ongoing work and support of our COVID-19 vaccine roll-out in Connecticut.

For the CT DPH Immunization Program, visit: [Contact Us](#)

For the COVID-19 webpage, visit: [COVID-19 Vaccine Program](#)

If you would like to unsubscribe from these communications, please send an email to Dph.immunizations@ct.gov with the subject line “Unsubscribe from COVID-19 Program communications”.