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**To:**

**Subject:** CoVP Provider Bulletin, Week of January 25, 2021

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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Dear Connecticut COVID-19 Vaccine Providers,

*This bulletin is sent to all key contacts at provider organizations administering COVID-19 vaccine. Please feel free to share it with others in your organization who may benefit from the update. Note that all of our communications are archived on our [web site](#).*

*In this week's bulletin, we want to reiterate some important information shared in previous communications. There are also several updates contained within this message. Please read the bulletin in its entirety.*

### **Allocation and scheduling**

First of all, we know that all providers are frustrated and challenged by variable and varying allocation week-to-week. Thank you for everything you are doing to adapt. This week, all current providers will be provided with a minimum allocation that they can expect moving forward for the next several weeks. We will communicate this allocation via email along with your order confirmation – or possibly sooner. We are working to enroll a diverse range of providers, but we cannot guarantee shipment to all providers making requests for vaccine. Specifically, newly enrolled providers should not expect to receive allocation for several weeks until more vaccine is available. This is in order to help ensure stable operations and equitable allocation among existing providers.

Our foremost principles in allocation are:

- Equitable allocation across geographies – ensuring each region receives vaccine in line with its population.
- Rapid access – ensuring providers only receive as much vaccine as they can confidently administer in a week.
- Diverse channels – we expect for a considerable amount of Connecticut's allocation to flow through hospital systems and mass vaccination sites, but also want to support other channels (e.g., pharmacies, local health departments, FQHCs, and clinics) to administer vaccine.
- Local coordination – we expect every provider administering vaccine to be actively in touch with the local health department of the town in which they are working. They should make sure that the LHD is aware of their plans and that their work is coordinated.

More information will be available about DPH's overall allocation approach. For now, please only schedule based on what you have been allocated. Once you have been given your forward-looking allocation, we ask that you schedule first doses 3-weeks out in advance (and only for 75+ and Phase 1a, of course).

### Provider role in eligibility

Please reference the accompanying attachment for information about the Provider Role in eligibility.

***All providers are expected to hang the Current Phase poster at their clinic and to verbally confirm that an individual meets the current eligibility phase and either lives or works in the State of Connecticut. You should turn away individuals who do not meet these criteria.***

Teachers are not currently eligible to receive vaccine. They should be turned away from clinics.

### Currently eligible groups

All Phase 1a individuals living or working in Connecticut.

- **Healthcare Personnel:** All paid and unpaid persons serving in healthcare settings who have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients of infectious materials
- **Long-Term Care Facility Residents: Adults** who reside in facilities that provide a range of services, including medical and personal care, to persons who are unable to live independently
- **Medical first responders:** Individuals who face risk of exposure to COVID-19 through their response to medical emergencies
- Select Phase 1b individuals living or working in Connecticut
- **Individuals 75-years of age and older**
- **Residents and staff of select congregate settings:** Residential facilities that provide supportive or supervisory services to their residents and where social distancing is not possible due to shared bedrooms, shared kitchens or shared bathrooms. These facilities are either licensed by or otherwise formally affiliated with the State of Connecticut and are administered by a private non-profit or other formal entity. In Phase 1b, congregate settings do **not** include supported apartments, foster or family settings, college dormitories, or boarding schools.

*Individuals who accidentally received a first dose of vaccine but did not meet current eligibility requirements should be scheduled for a second dose once the appropriate interval has passed (21 or 28 days based on product).*

### Scheduling second doses

All providers are expected to support patients to schedule second doses. Specifically, we recommend:

- For providers using their own scheduling systems, schedule first and second doses at the same time OR schedule second doses at the time of the first dose appointment.
- For providers using standard VAMS clinics, support the user to schedule the second dose during the observation period.
- For providers using third-party VAMS clinics, make sure you are holding a second dose clinic at the appropriate interval and scheduling individuals to attend it.

For VAMS users, we recommend you do NOT publish slots more than 21 days in advance or 28 days in advance depending on product. If you have treatment stations set up more than 21 or 28 days ahead, you can hide them by noting an “absence” on the treatment station and then uncheck the absence on the day of the clinic 21 or 28 days prior. This will help avoid first dose recipients scheduling so far in advance. Using the absence feature you can establish your schedule and treatment stations one time and use the absence functionality to manage schedule availability/visibility.

In addition, a new feature will be rolled out in VAMS that automatically protects 10% of all appointment slots for second doses only. Clinic-level customization of this feature will be coming shortly for you to set your own thresholds, but this should help to address stranded second dose recipients.

### **Ordering**

We have made changes to the ordering process. Starting this week, all providers should now submit their orders in our COVID-19 Vaccine Ordering portal, which can be accessed via the link below. <https://dphsubmissions.ct.gov/ClinicVaccinationOrder>.

In addition to the new platform, we are asking all providers to submit their orders no later than noon on Tuesdays (including this week) to allow greater time for planning and communication of provider allocations. We hope this will allow providers to plan clinics for the following week in a timelier manner.

Orders should be submitted for each PIN that is requesting a shipment of vaccine. Those who need their order shipped to an alternate location may indicate this in the order form.

### **COVID Vaccine Provider 211 Map**

The 2-1-1 public vaccine clinic directory is going 'live' today (1/25) and residents will be directed to it to search for clinics near them. Last evening your facility designee received an email to confirm the information on the directory ([www.211ct.org/vaccineclinics](http://www.211ct.org/vaccineclinics)) and update at <https://uwc.211ct.org/contact/vaccine-site-registration/> as needed. Once you confirm that your information is correct, please also complete the first few questions of the registration form specifically about appointment availability. We would like to track which clinics have appointments available in the next week, the next 3 weeks, or both/neither. This information will help residents more easily navigate the list of 100+ vaccine clinic locations.

### **Updates made to [Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of mRNA COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Authorized in the United States](#)** (as of January 21):

- Updated recommendations on intervals between the first and second dose
- Updated recommendations on interchangeability of vaccine products
- Updated language on vaccination of persons with a history of SARS-CoV-2 infection
- New vaccination recommendations in persons with a history of dermal fillers
- Additional resources on vaccine excipients

### **Managing Anaphylaxis – current information from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

Anaphylaxis, an acute and potentially life-threatening allergic reaction, has been reported following COVID-19 vaccination. [These interim considerations](#) provide information on preparing for the initial assessment and management of anaphylaxis following COVID-19 vaccination. Additionally, a report in the [Morbidity and Mortality Weekly](#) was published on 1/21 on this topic.

### **VAMS Trainings and DPH Office Hours**

VAMS Trainings and New Office Hours, view schedule and register at: [VAMS Training \(ct.gov\)](#).

- **VAMS Live Helpdesk Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday available 9:30am-12pm** Teams link: [Join conversation \(microsoft.com\)](#).
- **(NEW) Vaccination Q&A Session with LHDs:** COVID-19 Question and Answer Session for Local Health Department Clinics Fridays at 2pm.
- **CoVP Provider Weekly Update/Office Hours: Wednesday 9-10am** Teams link: [Click here to join the meeting](#)

### **VAMS Technology Updates**

- Clinics can run a 'Vaccine Administration Report' in VAMS for their clinic(s), using the **filter** options, including a custom date range, identifying the 1st and 2nd dose, brand and billing information. It can be exported to excel. View: VAMS-enhancements-126.pdf (ct.gov) [VAMS-enhancements-126.pdf \(ct.gov\)](#).
- Clinics can request to add additional clinics (Mobile, Pop up) in VAMS by submitting this form - Additional-VAMS-Clinic-Form-1\_7\_21.pdf (ct.gov). Visit: [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Departments-and-Agencies/DPH/dph/infectious\\_diseases/immunization/VAMS-Training-materials/Additional-VAMS-Clinic-Form-1\\_7\\_21.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Departments-and-Agencies/DPH/dph/infectious_diseases/immunization/VAMS-Training-materials/Additional-VAMS-Clinic-Form-1_7_21.pdf).

### **VAMS to CT WiZ Migrations**

- Starting this Wednesday, clinics can request to transition from VAMS to CT WiZ. Information will soon be posted on the VAMS training webpage [VAMS Training \(ct.gov\)](#). Clinics can begin this process by submitting a ticket via [DPH Ticketing System \(ct.gov\)](#) and choosing: COVID-19 Vaccination – Clinic - VAMS to CT WiZ Transition. Please include your PIN, types of VAMS clinics and estimated transition date. Clinics must have the capacity to do the following outside of CT WiZ: Identify and contact phase-eligible people in their community that need to be vaccinated; Schedule 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> dose appointments/communicate clinic schedules; Maintain reporting of required fields, per the Provider Agreement (either through your EHR interface in production CT WiZ or direct entry in CT WiZ). Clinics must continue to use VAMS until this transition process is completed with DPH.
- We ask that all clinics transitioning work with us to determine if there may be alternative solutions to what you are trying to accomplish. A VAMS third-party clinic often enables you to actively and better serve seniors or other individuals with technology limitations and enable flexible clinic models.

### **Inspection of Vaccine Clinics**

- Any provider that is vaccinating outside of their licensed facility (outdoor spaces, community sites, congregate locations, etc) must contact Anthony Bruno (Building Construction and Fire Safety Unit Supervisor, DPH FLIS) for DPH guidance and inspection of such areas. Point of contact for site is asked to email Mr. Bruno prior to the onset of the vaccination clinic start date at [anthony.m.bruno@ct.gov](mailto:anthony.m.bruno@ct.gov).

CT DPH Immunization Program

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Website: [CT Immunization Program](#) | [COVID-19 Vaccine Program](#)