

From: CTDPHHealth_Alert_Network@ct.gov <noreply@everbridge.net>
Sent: Monday, January 4, 2021 10:05 AM
To:
Subject: Vaccine Provider Bulletin Week of January 4, 2021 (Happy New Year)

EXTERNAL EMAIL: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Connecticut Department of Public Health COVID 19

Vaccine Provider Bulletin

Week of January 4, 2021 (Happy New Year)

Dear Connecticut COVID-19 Vaccine Providers,

This note is going 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.

There are several updates contained within this message. Please read this in its entirety.

Ensuring rapid access – updated inventory guidance

A core goal of our State's COVID Vaccine program is ensuring that Phase 1a eligible individuals have rapid access to our state's allocation of vaccine. We are happy that Connecticut has one of the highest rates of doses administered of all US States - thank you for everything that you are doing to rapidly administer COVID vaccine! In addition, we also want to make sure that everyone is paying appropriate scrutiny to what is currently in inventory.

Our provider guidance is:

- **When ordering, plan to use all doses requested by the end of the week.**
- **Make plans to use all doses currently on hand by end of this week, and all additional doses arriving this week by next Wednesday (1/13) – you will be able to request doses for next week this Wednesday.**
- **If you are observing slack in your schedule, let us know – we will work with you to ensure individuals can navigate to your clinics.**
- **We will work with you to redistribute doses that you cannot administer by next Wednesday (1/13) - and in your orders, you can request more doses for clinics next week.**
- **Our goal is to have 100% fill rate of slots and all doses rapidly used.** We prefer to have cancelled appointments due to lack of inventory rather than unused doses due to unnecessary safety stocks.

- **Make sure that your doses administered are reported within 24 hours.** Reported doses administered will influence weekly orders and doses reported after 24 hours will impact 2nd dose scheduling. If there are any reporting issues, please contact the department.
- **With second doses arriving this week, throughput needs will expand greatly** – this is an all-hands-on deck, all-of-facility effort to administer doses and enable rapid access for Phase 1a-eligible individuals.
- **Sam Kruse (Sam.Kruse@ct.gov)** will be the DPH lead on our inventory management and throughput efforts. He will be reaching out to you to determine what our needs are to support rapid access and administration of our State’s doses.

Storage and handling updates

It is imperative that you safeguard your vaccines—this includes reading through the storage and handling manual, drafting a detailed and complete emergency back-up plan, and monitoring the forecast for inclement weather that may result in power outages.

- You should be alerted immediately if a temperature excursion occurs. Moderna vaccine should be stored in a freezer until date of a clinic—this allows more leeway (Moderna can be used for 30 days if temperature rises in a freezer just above acceptable range; no leeway exists for excursion from refrigerator to room temperature)
- **No additional Moderna vaccine will be shipped to providers that do not have a freezer** capable of maintaining appropriate stable temperatures (between -25°C and -15°C / -13°F and 5°F) and a data logger for that unit. **Please update your equipment in the Manage Assets section of CT WiZ and submit 72 hours of stable temperatures if you have not already done so.**
- **Mandatory training:** CDC has created a new web on-demand, self-paced training module for healthcare providers who will be administering Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. Continuing education is available for this module. For more information, go to <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/ed/courses.html>. **Please complete by Friday, January 9 and update the training information for the primary and backup coordinator in CT WiZ.**

Wastage policy (see attachment)

Given the fact that both vaccines come in multi-dose vials, there is potential for wastage or excess vaccine at the end of the day, please see the attached document for specific guidance on how to manage this wastage. The key points are:

- The guiding principle is to make all reasonable efforts to use all available doses to vaccinate individuals who are eligible in the current phase.
- You should maintain a waitlist that can be called at the end of a clinic day, if needed, to use the rest of the doses.
- You should consider deferring vaccinations if the number of people at the clinic at the end of the day are not enough to use a full vial. You can ask these individuals to return the next day.

Ensuring eligibility to receive vaccine (see attachment)

We are aware of issues with non-phase 1a individuals receiving vaccine during the current phase. Please review the attached document for guidance on the provider’s role in upholding our eligibility policies as a State. The key parts of this policy are:

- Ask individuals to confirm their eligibility at time of appointment.
- Hang the “Current Phase” poster in prominent locations at your clinic.
- Consider using the personal attestation card if you choose.
- Cancel appointments of individuals who may be attending clinics out-of-phase.

Additional information

- **VAMS On-Demand Support – Available 9a-3p Monday to Thursday this week.** [Click here to Join Meeting](#). Join at any time during the open hours with VAMS-related questions.
- **Second doses will start arriving automatically this week.** Everyone who received a first shipment of Pfizer in week 1 will receive the same amount this week for second doses. If for any reason you do not already have your clinic set up, scheduled, and ready to administer second doses please make sure this is fixed immediately. Our goal is to complete second doses on schedule (21 days for Pfizer, 28 days for Moderna)
- **Accounting for extra doses in a vaccine vial in VAMS:** Please log the extra doses by manually adding an entire vial and then subtracting doses not in the vial to account for and reconcile your inventory.
- **VAMS updates and training links:** [VAMS Training \(ct.gov\)](#).
- **Second dose scheduling VAMS:** Guidance for scheduling second dose appointments in VAMS is on our web site.
- **Ordering process:** As previously indicated, orders for more “first doses” of vaccine should be submitted through the VAMS clinic portal for VAMS users (or CT WiZ for non-VAMS users) by noon each Wednesday. Please order what you will confidently be able to administer within 7 days of receiving shipment. DPH will communicate final orders by Friday. If you submitted an order that was not filled this week, resubmit a new order by noon on Wednesday to be considered in next weeks’ fulfillment. Please note that previously placed orders remain in the system even if not fulfilled but will not be considered in future weeks requests for allocation.
- **Adverse event reporting:** Please remember to report any adverse events in recipients following COVID-19 vaccination to the [Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System](#), and encourage participation in [V-safe](#) by including information about the system at clinic locations.
- **Expiration dates:** To determine the expiration date of a Moderna vaccine, [consult this website](#). Pfizer vaccine should have an expiration date printed on the vial.
- **Additional resources:** We are making updates to our COVID-19 Providers page in real time as we receive information from CDC, Pfizer, Moderna, and others. You can find this information on the [DPH COVID-19 Vaccine Providers website](#). We are also archiving our communications on this page.

CT DPH Immunization Program

Main P: (860) 509-7929 | Fax: (860) 706-5429 | Email: dph.immunizations@ct.gov

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