

Employee Update – January 13, 2021

The Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) will issue periodic *Employee Updates* to Prince George's County Government employees regarding personnel policies and procedures, professional development opportunities, and employee benefits information.

Stay Informed:

Employee Info from Human Resources	County Updates on COVID-19 Vaccine	Tweets from the County Executive	Tips and Info for Working Remotely
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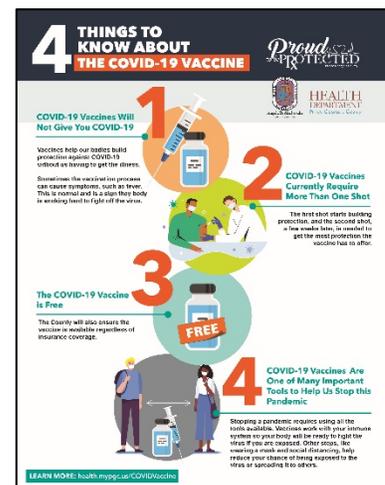
What You Need to Know About the COVID-19 Vaccine

What is the COVID-19 Vaccine?

A COVID-vaccine is one way to prevent serious illness due to COVID-19. Vaccination causes your body to create antibodies without getting sick with the COVID-19 disease.

How Do We Know the COVID-19 Vaccine is Safe?

Vaccines undergo a series of rigorous clinical trials using thousands of study participants to generate data and other information for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to determine their safety and effectiveness to approve or authorize for emergency use. Health experts have evaluated the vaccines scientifically and have all arrived at the same conclusion that these vaccines can prevent the spread of COVID-19, but only if we get vaccinated.



Fact Sheet: 4 Things to Know About the COVID-19 Vaccine

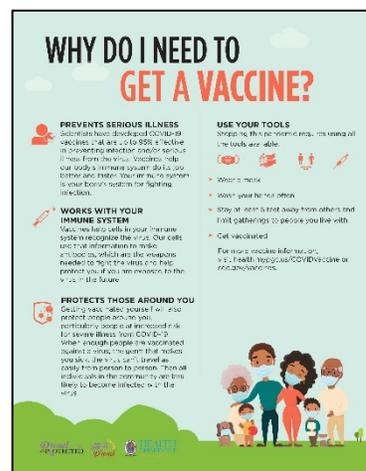
Is a COVID-19 Vaccine Necessary?

COVID-19 infections can be a minor hindrance or lead to severe disease or even death. There are many reasons to get vaccinated. Based on what we know about vaccines for other diseases, experts believe that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get COVID-19.

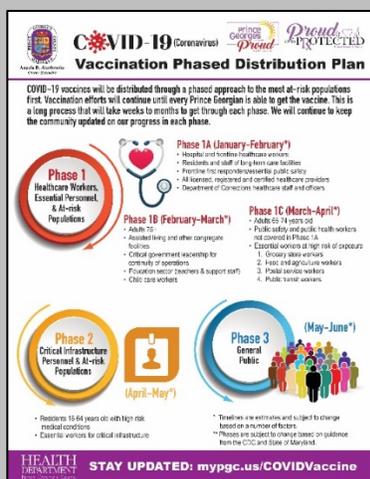
- Getting vaccinated yourself may also protect people around you, particularly people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- COVID-19 vaccination will help protect you by creating antibodies in your immune system that can fight the virus and reduce your chance of severe illness if you are infected.
- Wearing masks and social distancing help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others, but these measures are not enough. Vaccines will work with your immune system so it will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed.

Why Do I Need to Get the Vaccine?

Stopping a pandemic requires using all the tools available. Vaccines work with your immune system so your body will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed. Other steps, like covering your mouth and nose with a mask and staying at least 6 feet away from others, help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others. Together, COVID-19 vaccination and following CDC's recommendations to protect yourself and others will offer the best protection from COVID-19.



Fact Sheet: *Why Do I Need to Get a Vaccine?*



COVID-19 Vaccine Phased Distribution Plan

COVID-19 Vaccination Phased Distribution Plan

When Can I Get Vaccinated and How Will I Sign Up or Be Notified That I Am Eligible?

Over the coming weeks and months, COVID-19 vaccines will be distributed through a phased approach that will focus on protecting our most at-risk populations first, based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the State of Maryland. Right now, we are in the beginning of Phase 1A of the vaccine distribution plan, with the current supply of vaccines going primarily to frontline healthcare workers, long-term care facilities, and first responders.

Phase 1A (January-February)

- Hospital and frontline health care workers:**
 Most hospital and frontline health care workers will be vaccinated at their place of employment.
- Residents and staff of long-term care facilities/nursing homes:**
 Individuals living and working in long-term care facilities and nursing homes will be vaccinated as a part of the Federal Pharmacy Partnership Program. The State of Maryland and/or the pharmacies that are part of the program will coordinate directly with long-term care facilities.
- Frontline first responders/essential public safety workers:**
 All eligible frontline first responders and essential public safety personnel will receive an email from the County Health Department with instructions on how to make an appointment to receive their vaccination.
- All licensed, registered and certified health care providers:**
 All licensed, registered and certified healthcare providers are required to report the number of individuals that will likely receive the vaccine using the vaccination pre-registration form. When the Health Department is ready to start scheduling appointments, these healthcare providers will receive a link to schedule their appointment. The pre-registration form is available here:

- **Department of Corrections staff:**

The Department of Corrections staff will receive an email from the County Health Department with instructions on how to make an appointment to receive their vaccination when it is their time.

Phase 1B (February-March)

When the County is ready to begin Phase 1B, individuals who are eligible to receive the vaccine in Phase 1B will be required to sign up for an appointment at a vaccination clinic through the State of Maryland's vaccine website: marylandvax.org.

- Adults ages 75 and up
- Assisted living and other congregate settings (shelters)
- Education/Childcare Sector (teachers and support staff, childcare workers)
- Critical government leadership for continuity of operations

Phase 1C (March-April)

When the County is ready to begin Phase 1C, individuals who are eligible to receive the vaccine in Phase 1C will be required to sign up for an appointment at a vaccination clinic through the State of Maryland's vaccine website: marylandvax.org.

- Adults 65 – 74 years of age
- Health and human services not covered in Phase 1A
- Public safety not covered in Phase 1A
- Essential workers at high-risk of exposure (in alphabetical order)
 - Food and agriculture workers (farms and processing centers)
 - Grocery store workers
 - Public Transit workers (including transport for seniors and persons with disabilities)
 - Postal Service workers

What Can I Do to Help Protect Myself from Getting COVID-19 Until I Can Receive a Vaccine?

You should cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others, avoid close contact with people who are sick, stay 6 feet away from others, avoid crowds and wash your hands often. Get more information about these and other steps you can take to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.



Proud to Be Protected:
*4 Tools to Help You
Protect Yourself and Others*

How Many Doses of a COVID-19 Vaccine Will I Need?

At this time, both the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines have been approved for distribution across the United States by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccinations require an initial shot, and then a follow-up less than a month later; 21 days for Pfizer and 28 days for Moderna. Since several vaccines are likely to become available over time, it is possible that some vaccines will require one dose.

Will I Have to Pay for COVID-19 Vaccination?

Vaccine doses purchased with U.S. taxpayer dollars will be given to the American people at no cost. However, vaccination providers will be able to charge an administration fee for giving the shot to someone. Vaccine providers can get this fee reimbursed by the patient's public or private insurance company or, for uninsured patients, by the Health Resources and Services Administration's Provider Relief Fund.

If I Had the Virus and Recovered, Will I Still Need to Get the Vaccine?

We do not know how long antibodies last after infection or whether they will protect against reinfection. So, while vaccine trials are being completed, it will be important for scientists to continue learning about COVID-19, particularly whether people who got sick with COVID-19 can be reinfected. The current vaccine trials will include immunizing people who have never been infected with COVID-19 as well as those who have been previously infected. We will soon know whether vaccination of those who have been previously infected affords more complete or longer lasting protection than those who were previously infected but haven't been vaccinated.

Stay Informed on the Progress the County is Making with Vaccination

Distribution

The [COVID-19 Vaccination Dashboard](#) is an easy way to see how many fellow Prince Georgians are *Proud to be Protected*. The data in this dashboard includes hospitals that have received shipments of COVID-19 vaccines, long-term care facilities receiving vaccinations through our CVS and Walgreens pharmacy partnership, and vaccinations administered directly by our County Health Department.

COVID-19 Vaccination Webpage

For more information, the [COVID-19 vaccine webpage](#) contains the latest updates to our phased distribution plan, frequently asked questions, initial information on how residents in future phases will be able to sign up for vaccines, and more.



COVID-19 Vaccination Webpage

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