

PHASE 1A
GUIDANCE FOR
COVID-19 VACCINE
ALLOCATION

THE COVID-19 **VACCINE**



OVERVIEW

The South Carolina COVID-19 Vaccine Plan includes several phases of vaccine distribution and administration. In Phase 1, vaccine supply will be limited, and efforts will be focused on rapidly reaching targeted populations, including healthcare personnel, people at high risk, and critical infrastructure workers.

Phase 1 will be divided into three sub-phases: Phase 1a, 1b and 1c.

In Phase 1a, vaccine allocation will be prioritized to subsets outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to include staff and residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities and people working in healthcare settings. The purpose is to maximize vaccinations for those serving in roles that reduce COVID-19 morbidity and mortality and to reduce the burden on strained healthcare capacity and facilities.

PHASE 1A

The overarching principle in Phase 1a is averting deaths. For this initial phase DHEC recommends vaccinating healthcare providers and workers in healthcare settings. If these providers were to become sick and unable to work, health care systems could become too overwhelmed to provide care, and mortality would increase. Other workers in healthcare settings who may be exposed to suspect or confirmed COVID-19 patients or infective materials are included in Phase 1a. However, administration of vaccine will need to be staggered within this first phase, depending on supply, facilities' staffing resources, and vaccine uptake.

Hospitals can begin vaccinating their admitted patients who are aged 65 years and older, as long as they do not currently have COVID-19 and a provider feels it is indicated for them.

Additionally, because of the high mortality among long-term care facility (LTCF) residents, Phase 1a includes vaccination of LTCF residents and staff. A federal/pharmacy partnership will provide vaccination services to LTCFs; other vaccine providers will not need to vaccinate these people. At any phase, persons may initially decline vaccine and receive it at a later phase. Consider vaccinating vaccinators in 1a to reduce their risk of contracting COVID-19 from asymptomatic infected high-risk workers.

Within each Phase, all groups have equal priority. The bulleted lists below include groups eligible for Phase 1a vaccinations but are not intended to suggest hierarchy; it is an alphabetical list.

Hospitals and other COVID-19 vaccination providers may vaccinate providers and staff of non-affiliated physician practices, as well as all other healthcare workers who are listed in this guidance in Phase 1a, if they have the capability and availability to do so.

Scheduling an appointment

Employers are encouraged to reach out to their [local hospitals](#) as soon as possible and no later than Jan. 15, 2021, with a list of names and contact information of employees who want to be vaccinated. In addition, individuals in Phase 1a who want to be vaccinated should contact their [local hospitals](#) to request and schedule an appointment no later than Jan. 15, 2021. If there is not a hospital in your county, you should contact the nearest hospital to you.

Phase 1a mission-critical workers and individuals include:

- 70+ year olds, regardless of health status or preexisting conditions
- Anesthesiology assistants, registered cardiovascular invasive specialists, and operating room staff
- Athletic Trainers
- American Sign Language (ASL) and other interpreters in healthcare facilities
- Autopsy room staff, coroners, embalmers, and funeral home staff at risk of exposure to bodily fluids
- Chiropractors
- Dentists and dental hygienists and technicians
- Dietary and food services staff in healthcare facilities
- Environmental services staff in healthcare facilities
- Harbor pilots
- Home health and hospice workers
- Hospital transport personnel
- Hospital inpatients 65 and older
- Laboratory personnel and phlebotomists
- Licensed dietitians
- Long-Term Care Facility (LTCF) residents and staff
- Medical assistants
- Medical first responders (paid and volunteer): EMS; fire department and law enforcement personnel who provide emergency medical care
- Nurses, nurse practitioners, and nurse's aides/ assistants
- Opticians and optometrists and assistants/ technicians
- Parents who are home caregivers of a child who is medically fragile or complex or severely disabled. (*Requires a medical provider's signed attestation to confirm parent meets criteria.*)
- Persons providing medical care in correctional facilities and correctional officers
- Pharmacists and pharmacy technicians
- Physical and occupational therapists and assistants
- Physicians, including medical house staff (i.e., interns, residents, fellows), and physician assistants
- Podiatrists
- Public health healthcare workers who are frequently interacting with persons with potential COVID-19 infection
- Radiology technicians
- Respiratory care practitioners, such as respiratory therapists
- Speech language pathologists and assistants and audiologists
- State/local government employees and their contractors who are mission-critical for maintaining operations of COVID-19 vaccinations and testing in SC
- Students and interns of the above categories

DHEC recommends facilities apply higher vaccination status priority for the following factors during these limited vaccine supply circumstances:

- Personnel with the highest exposure because of longest duration of hands-on patient care or involvement in aerosol-generating procedures
- Co-morbid conditions, including age ≥ 65 that place workers at higher risk of severe COVID-19 illness and death
- “Bench depth” or the number of workers available for a given skilled task

CONTACT US

- For questions regarding phases of the COVID-19 Vaccination Plan, please email: ACC-Immunization@dhec.sc.gov.
- For questions relating to COVID provider enrollment, please email: COVIDproviderenrollment@dhec.sc.gov.
- If you are an immunizer provider with questions related to the Vaccine Administration Management System, please email: VAMS@dhec.sc.gov.

