

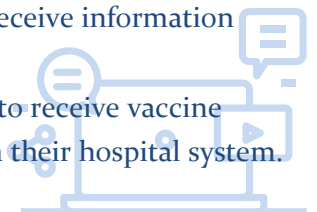


# Frequently Asked Questions – Vaccines Info Line

Information as of 1/10/2021. Vaccine distribution is a dynamic process and this document will be updated as new information becomes available.

## When can I get the vaccine?

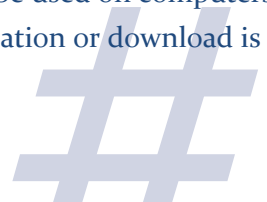
- 80 years of age and older population
  - There will be ongoing supply of vaccines available through local health departments for West Virginians age 80 and older. Health departments will individually announce availability and locations for vaccinations. If individuals in this age category are patients at a Community Health Center (also known as Federally Qualified Health Center), they will be contacted by that center regarding access to a COVID-19 vaccine. Moving forward there will be additional providers offering vaccine to this population and that information will be relayed through various communication means when supply increases.
  - As vaccine supply increases, there will be more vaccines available to the general population based on age. Once vaccines are available at locations throughout West Virginia, they will be distributed on a first come, first served basis and those locations will be announced at that time. We appreciate your patience with this process as the state has worked to equitably and efficiently distribute our allocation of COVID-19 vaccines.
- When will the 70 (also applicable 60, 50, 40, 30, 20) years of age and older population be able to get vaccines? Same response applies to those with comorbidities.
  - West Virginia is dedicated to ensuring that all West Virginians have access to a COVID-19 vaccination as soon as possible based on the recommendations outlined by U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), and our own epidemiological data. As soon as vaccines are available for your population, it will be announced by the Governor and additional details will likely be shared by your local health department through a variety of communication means.
- Healthcare worker (Physician's office, medical clinic, Dentists, physical therapists, occupational therapy, etc.)
  - **For private practice offices:** Communication on vaccine allocation and timelines for your organization will come directly from your respective board (Board of Medicine, Board of Osteopathic Medicine, Board of Dentistry, etc). Please see the process for vaccine allocation and registration document, which is also available on the [coronavirus.wv.gov](https://coronavirus.wv.gov) for additional information on the process.
  - **Community Health Centers/Federally Qualified Health Center:** receive information from the West Virginia Primary Care Association.
  - **Healthcare professionals who work at a hospital system** are likely to receive vaccine through their hospital. Those individuals will receive information from their hospital system.



- For more information on the Vaccine Administration Management System:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/reporting/vams/faqs.html>
- Other healthcare worker that may not fall under category above
  - Communication on vaccine allocation and timelines for your organization will come directly from your respective board, association, or employer. Currently, vaccine supplies are slowly increasing in West Virginia. As that takes place, more doses are being shared with healthcare locations throughout the state. It is not possible to give an accurate timeline as to when your location or facility will receive the vaccine, but you remain in the highest priority category in the State's COVID-19 vaccination plan. Maintain regular contact with your facility/location for important details on when the vaccine may be offered.
- Retailers/manufacturing
  - Communication on vaccine allocation and timelines for your organization will come directly from your respective association (retailers association, OMEGA, etc). If you do not hear directly from them, we urge you to reach out to them for details as the state will not be managing the vaccine process at that level. They can also reach out to the JIATF Joint Information Center at [ng.wv.wvarng.mbx.covid-jic@mail.mil](mailto:ng.wv.wvarng.mbx.covid-jic@mail.mil)
- School faculty and staff 50 years of age or older
  - The WV Department of Education will be managing the vaccine distribution process for school faculty and staff through the local superintendents. Specific details related to when and where teachers can receive a vaccine will be handled by their respective superintendents.
  - School faculty and staff who are under the age of 50 will be offered vaccine(s) at a later date in the State's phased COVID-19 vaccination plan.
- When will the general public be able to get a vaccine?
  - The guiding principles in decision making for allocating the limited supplies of vaccines include protecting the most vulnerable West Virginians, reducing hospitalizations, reducing the rate of deaths, and ensuring the state and local communities can maintain critical services including our acute care system. West Virginia is dedicated to ensuring that all West Virginians have access to a COVID-19 vaccination as soon as possible and will expand access to additional population groups as vaccine supply increases. Our earliest estimate is that we can begin to offer vaccines to the entire general public in March. As soon as vaccines are available for this population, it will be announced and additional details be made available.

## How to schedule a vaccination appointment?

- For phase 1 priority occupations, such as healthcare professionals
  - The Vaccine Administration Management System (VAMS) is an easy-to-use, secure, online tool to manage vaccine administration from the time the vaccine arrives at a clinic to when it is administered to a person. VAMS is free for approved clinics and can be used on computers, tablets, and other mobile devices. It is not a smartphone app; no installation or download is



required for this web-based platform. VAMS allow clinicians to set up customized vaccine schedules and allow recipients to make vaccination appointments, in addition to sending a reminder about returning for a second dose.

West Virginians identified to be in a Phase 1 priority occupation, such as a healthcare worker, will use VAMS to schedule their vaccination appointment. After you have been identified by your employer or signed up through your respective board, phase 1 participants will receive an email from [no-reply@mail.vams.cdc.gov](mailto:no-reply@mail.vams.cdc.gov) indicating you are now eligible to schedule the vaccination appointment. Sometimes, these emails can be filtered into an individual's junk or clutter box, it is important to check spam/junk folder for this email if you believed you should have received one to ensure it wasn't discarded improperly.

In the VAMS system, eligible vaccine recipients will be asked to select a vaccine appointment time and location. It is critical that you select the appropriate location based on guidance and instructions from your employer or board or corresponding agency. For example, if you are a private practice physician and told to schedule at a pharmacy, you must select a pharmacy. Moving forward, this will expand as vaccine supply and administration locations increase. Until then, it is important to read instructions prior to scheduling an appointment to ensure your appointment is not cancelled.

For more information on VAMS: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/reporting/vams/faqs.html>

What if there are no available appointments or locations near me when I go to schedule my appointment?

- In the VAMS system, eligible vaccine recipients will be asked to select a vaccine appointment time and location. It is critical that the recipient select the appropriate location based on guidance and instructions from your employer or board or corresponding agency. If there are no available locations initially, first try to extend the search radius as the default is 10 miles. By extending the search radius, available appointments/locations may be identified.

I am a phase 1 priority occupation and have not received the email from VAMS?

- Phase 1 participants will receive an email from [no-reply@mail.vams.cdc.gov](mailto:no-reply@mail.vams.cdc.gov) indicating you are now eligible to schedule the vaccination appointment. If you do not receive an email but believe you are eligible, first communicate with your board or employer to ensure your name and email address was properly documented.
- If you believe you should have received an email from VAMS, it is important to check spam/junk folder for this email to ensure it was not discarded improperly.
- There is a limited supply, so although you may have submitted the information, your group may not yet be eligible based on supply. West Virginia is dedicated to ensuring that all West Virginians have access to a COVID-19 vaccination as soon as possible. The state is urging



patience for all those waiting. As West Virginia receives more vaccine supply, there will be more access to the vaccine. We appreciate your commitment to protecting West Virginia.

- Long term care facility residents and staff?
  - This information is coordinated through the long term care facility through coordination with the West Virginia Healthcare Association. Questions should be directed to the long term care facility or the WV Healthcare Association.
- For persons eligible for vaccination based on age?
  - 80+ population: will be contacted by an FQHC or can sign up at a local health department or visit a first come, first serve vaccination event at a local health department.
  - Health departments utilize a number of methods for communication about upcoming vaccination clinics including social media, radio, television, print and word of mouth. It is always best to call first to verify availability before showing up at a local health department.
  - At this time, this particular population is not using VAMS to schedule appointments, and the scheduling will be done by the FQHC or local health department.

### What is West Virginia's vaccination plan?

- The guiding principles in decision making for allocating the limited supplies of vaccines include protecting the most vulnerable West Virginians, reducing hospitalizations, reducing the rate of deaths, and ensuring the state and local communities can maintain critical services including our acute care system.
  - Initially vaccines were offered to those in long term care and assisted living facilities – including staff and residents, pharmacists, healthcare workers in hospital ICUs, emergency rooms and COVID-19 wards, as well as first responders.
  - As vaccine allocations are increasing, the plan has expanded to include various phases in 1 A-D and portions of the most vulnerable of the general population (those above age 80 currently).
  - West Virginia's vaccination plan overlaps between the various sections in Phase 1 A-D which are located on [vaccinate.wv.gov](https://vaccinate.wv.gov).

