



Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

1320  
Braddock  
Place  
Alexandria  
VA 22314

**DATE:** December 9, 2021

**SUBJECT:** COVID-19 Vaccines for Children Ages Five to Eleven and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

**TO:** All WIC State Agencies  
All Regional Offices

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) encourages State agencies to consider opportunities to highlight the benefits of the COVID-19 vaccine to parents and caregivers of children ages 5 to 11. On November 2, 2021, with authorization from the Food and Drug Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for children within this age group. This letter discusses important opportunities to support WIC families by advising them that children within this approved age group are now eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

The best way to protect children against COVID-19 is to get them vaccinated. Like other pediatric vaccines, the COVID-19 vaccine was thoroughly tested on children before being recommended, and the most common side-effect of the vaccine is a sore arm. Finding a vaccine is easy and getting vaccinated is free. Parents can find available vaccines at <https://www.vaccines.gov/> or by contacting their healthcare provider or local pharmacy. The vaccine is available at no cost to any child who meets the age criterion, regardless of insurance or immigration status.

State agencies can remind WIC families that participants who are four years of age will be eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine once they turn five. State agencies can also remind WIC families with children who have aged out of the Program or have other children in the household within the approved age group for vaccination that these children are now qualified as well.

FNS encourages State agencies to use non-WIC funds to support awareness activities, including adding vaccine messaging to interactive voice response (IVR) services; sharing information provided by the CDC during certification and recertification appointments, and on public websites; and partnering with State and local organizations to spread the word using existing communication channels in multiple languages, including social media, to notify participants of the availability and importance of COVID vaccination for children.

FNS appreciates your assistance in raising awareness of this important effort. If WIC families have questions about the vaccine, they should talk to a pediatrician, school nurse, or another trusted healthcare provider.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amy Herring', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Amy Herring  
Acting Director  
Supplemental Food Programs Division  
Food and Nutrition Service