

DPH Advises Vaccine Providers To Offer Booster Doses For All Three COVID-19 Vaccine Brands To Eligible Delawareans

DOVER (OCT. 22, 2021) – The Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) today announced that Delaware’s vaccine providers can begin administering booster doses for vaccines made by Moderna and Johnson & Johnson to certain populations that have been recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Pfizer-BioNTech’s COVID-19 vaccine received booster authorization last month. DPH is also advising that any of the three authorized vaccines can be administered to qualifying individuals as a booster in a “mix and match” approach to the vaccine originally received.

This decision comes after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) formally gave its approval Wednesday to expand the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to allow for a booster dose for Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines. The FDA also gave EUA approval to permit medical providers to administer boosters of any vaccine brand to individuals regardless of the brand vaccine they originally received.

CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) met Thursday to provide additional guidance on who should receive a booster dose under the EUA, and CDC Director Dr. Rochelle P. Walensky endorsed the advisory committee’s recommendations later that evening.

Based on CDC recommendations for individuals who received a Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, the following

groups are eligible for a booster shot 6 months or more after their initial series:

People 65 years and older

People aged 18 and older who live in long-term care settings

People 18 and older who have underlying medical conditions, which include but are not limited to: cancer, chronic heart, lung and kidney diseases, dementia, diabetes, down syndrome, HIV, overweight and obesity, pregnancy, organ transplants, and stroke.

People 18 and older who work or live in high-risk settings, including health care workers, teachers and daycare staff, grocery workers and those in homeless shelters or prisons, among others.

For individuals who received the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine, booster shots are also recommended for those who are 18 and older and who were vaccinated two or more months ago.

For convenience, eligible individuals may choose which vaccine they receive as a booster dose. CDC's recommendations now allow for this type of mix and match dosing for booster shots.

According to CDC, while data show vaccines remain effective in preventing hospitalization and severe disease, a booster shot will help provide continued protection against severe disease in these populations who are especially at risk for severe COVID-19, including those over 65, residents of long-term care facilities, and persons 18 – 64 with underlying health conditions. DPH is encouraging individuals in these most at-risk categories to seek booster vaccines first.

“Today's announcement is great news in the fight against COVID-19. Not surprisingly, we have seen signs that the vaccine wanes over time and getting a booster is key to increasing protection against severe disease and death,” said DPH Director Dr. Karyl Rattay. “Now is not the time to take our foot off the pedal. Those who are eligible should get

their booster, and those who are not yet vaccinated should make this their number one priority.”

COVID-19 vaccine providers in Delaware may begin administering booster doses immediately or as soon as they are able. Members of the public who are eligible for a booster shot are recommended to seek vaccine at existing vaccine sites, including pharmacies, health care providers, Federally Qualified Health Centers (for patients), and standing DPH Vaccine sites:

Blue Hen Corporate Center: 655 S. Bay Road, Dover, DE 19901

Georgetown Plaza: 19 Georgetown Plaza, Georgetown, DE 19947

Canby Park: 1920 Maryland Ave., Wilmington, DE 19805

University Plaza, 256 Chapman Road, Suite 100, Newark, DE 19702

As a reminder, Delawareans who have certain immunocompromising conditions, including those who have received organ or stem cell transplants, are undergoing treatment for HIV or cancer, or who are taking medication that suppresses the immune system, are currently eligible to receive an additional dose of either Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, if they completed their second dose at least 28 days prior.

DPH encourages providers to use their clinical judgment and to consider additional factors for their patients when determining if the person meets the qualifications for immunocompromised status and is eligible for an additional/third dose of Pfizer or Moderna. These factors may include assessing patients who reside in a long-term care facility or patients of advanced age (especially those over age 85).

For a complete list of locations where vaccines are available, visit de.gov/getmyvaccine.