



Department of Health

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Dear Hospital Colleagues:

We thank you for the recent enrollment of your hospital network or individual facility in the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) COVID-19 Vaccination Program, including completion of the COVID-19 Vaccination Program Provider Agreement. Under this Program, vaccine distribution will be prioritized in a way that promotes equity and social and economic wellbeing and protects individuals at greatest risk of exposure to and/or severe illness from COVID-19.

This letter serves to provide information to assist you in preparing to vaccinate your high-risk health care personnel first, while vaccine is in limited supply. Vaccination of other health care personnel and your patient population will follow when more vaccine becomes available. The NYSDOH will communicate as more information becomes available and guidance is provided by federal government.

Vaccine Distribution, Storage and Handling, and Administration

Initial distribution of the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines is expected to begin in mid-December 2020, after Emergency Use Authorization has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Shortly after the Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices (ACIP) releases its recommendations for the use of COVID-19 vaccine, vaccination activities will commence. Vaccine supply is initially expected to be limited but will expand over the following weeks to months such that supply will meet demand. When vaccines are available, and you have submitted your vaccine order (see next section), you will receive partial shipments of vaccine based on supply and your facility's storage capacity. As vaccine is administered and more vaccine is allocated, additional vaccine will be shipped.

If you did not have ultracold storage units onsite when you completed the COVID-19 Vaccination Program Provider Agreement, but subsequently obtained these units, please notify NYSDOH of the change via email at covid19vaccine@health.ny.gov with a subject line of "ULTRA-COLD STORAGE CHANGE".

Providers are required to administer COVID-19 vaccine to individuals regardless of insurance status or ability to pay. Providers may not bill for the cost of the vaccine but may bill the individual's health insurance for an administration fee. Providers vaccinating individuals with no health insurance or whose insurance does not cover the administration fee can request reimbursement for the administration of the COVID-19 vaccine through the [Provider Relief Fund](#).

The following table describes the currently known characteristics of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines:

	Pfizer vaccine	Moderna vaccine
Minimum Order	195 vials = 975 doses (1 tray = 9 in X 9 in X 2 in)	10 vials = 100 doses (1 carton)
Freezer Storage	Ultra-Cold (-60 ⁰ C to -80 ⁰ C) -up to 6 months in ultra-cold temperature freezer -up to 15days in thermal shipper with dry ice replenishment	Frozen (-25 ⁰ C to -20 ⁰ C) -up to 6 months in freezer
Refrigerator Storage	2° to 8°C for up to 5 days	2° to 8°C for up to 30 days
Room temperature	Up to 6 hours	Up to 12 hours
Reconstitution required	Yes	No
Route of administration	Intramuscular	Intramuscular
Minimum interval between doses	21 days	28 days

Ordering Vaccine through the New York State Immunization Information System (NYSIIS)

Please note that redistribution is discouraged for the Pfizer vaccine. Redistribution must be approved in advance each time that vaccine is given to another location. This includes all vaccine sent to another enrolled site for storage and administration. It does not include movement to temporary administration sites. Vaccine quantity moved for temporary administration should not exceed the best estimate for the number of doses to be administered in a single day at that location. Each hospital site that has storage capacity and/or ability to use the Pfizer shipper for storage should place their prebook request to receive shipments directly. **You will be able to place your COVID-19 vaccine prebook request in NYSIIS starting today. Please follow the instructions attached to enter your prebook request by noon tomorrow, December 4, 2020.**

Please submit you prebook request for the number of first dose COVID-19 vaccines you will need for **only** your health care personnel. Please be sure to include all individuals that meet the CDC definition of healthcare personnel: **paid and unpaid** persons serving in healthcare settings who have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials. At a later time, you will be asked to place a prebook request for the second dose for each individual. Note: you may change your prebook request or submit another, as needed. You will be notified when vaccine is allocated. Prebook does not guarantee immediate allocation. When notified by email to the location primary and backup coordinators, you must indicate in NYSIIS whether you are requesting the allocation. Once you request the allocation, an order is placed, and that quantity will be shipped to your shipping address on file.

Note that NYSIIS must be used for facilities located outside NYC. Facilities located within NYC will receive ordering information from the New York City Department of Health and Mental

Hygiene (NYCDOHMH).

In addition, ancillary vaccination supplies will be shipped to the facility in a separate container and will include needles, syringes, alcohol pads, vaccination cards, face shields (2 per 100 doses) and facemasks (4 per 100 doses). Diluent will be shipped to sites receiving the Pfizer vaccine. In addition, facilities receiving the Pfizer vaccine will receive dry ice needed for the first recharge of the shipping container within 24 hours, should the facility be planning to use the shipping container for vaccine storage. A kit with thermal gloves, apron and eye protection will also be provided.

Readiness Checklist

1. Identify and communicate with your high-risk personnel

The first group to be vaccinated will be high-risk health care personnel. This group includes not only clinicians but any staff who work in settings where transmission is higher or who are at higher risk of transmitting the virus to patients who are at elevated risk of severe morbidity or mortality. We recommend including these considerations in determinations about which staff fit within this category:

- Staff who work directly with COVID-19 patients, for example, by providing direct care, cleaning, handling the deceased bodies, or transport services
- Staff who perform procedures with higher risk of aerosolization
- Staff who have uncontrolled exposure to patients or the public in a way that may increase the risk of transmission
- Staff who are in close contact with patients who are at greater risk of morbidity and mortality if exposed

Please be sure to identify these individuals and communicate your plan for offering COVID-19 vaccine to them. We ask that you implement an appointment schedule to make it possible to complete the first dose of the vaccine series for your high-risk personnel within 10 days of receiving the vaccine. In addition, hospitals should track uptake among their staff and may also decide to keep records of staff that decline vaccination.

2. Train staff in COVID-19 vaccine ordering, storage and handling, and administration

CDC has posted COVID-19 vaccination materials on its websites at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/vaccination-resources.html>, and we have included attachments from Pfizer about the thermal shipping container and storage and handling of this vaccine. We will make additional training materials available in the coming weeks.

3. Prepare to report COVID-19 vaccinations to NYSIIS

Reporting of all COVID-19 vaccinations to the NYSIIS within 24 hours of administration is required. COVID-19 vaccine codes will need to be added to your electronic health record (EHR) screens and NYSIIS interface.

CVX	CPT	Sale Proprietary Name	MX	Unit of Sale (UOS)	UOS Package
207	91301	Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine	MOD	80777-273-99	Carton, 10 multi-dose vials
208	91300	Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccine	PFR	59267-1000-2	Carton, 195 multi-dose vials

The NYSDOH appreciates your collaboration to ensure equitable and wide access of the COVID-19 vaccine. For questions, please email covid19vaccine@health.ny.gov. We will send periodic updates to keep you informed. We thank you for participating in this historic effort to protect New Yorkers from COVID-19.