



COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Guidance

Summary Sheet Updates Updated March 18, 2021

Our goal is to vaccinate as many people as quickly and fairly as possible given the limited supply of vaccines.

Prioritization Groups

- Group 1 Health care workers and Long-term care staff and residents — **ACTIVE**
- Group 2 Older adults (defined as 65 and above) — **ACTIVE**
- Group 3 Frontline essential workers — **ACTIVE**
- Group 4 Adults at high risk for exposure and increased risk of severe illness — **ACTIVE for high-risk conditions and additional congregate settings** (Essential workers not yet vaccinated and other group living settings **NOT YET OPEN**)
- Group 5 Everyone who wants a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccination — **NOT YET OPEN**

Key Updates March 18, 2021

- **Group 4 [Section 4.4]:** North Carolina moved to [Group 4](#) starting on March 17 starting with people who have a high-risk medical condition and people in additional congregate settings, including people experiencing homelessness or living in a homeless shelter and people in a correctional facility, such as jail or prison. Additional members of Group 4, including other essential workers not yet vaccinated and people living in other group setting (e.g., students in dorms or other close group living settings) will be eligible starting April 7th.
- **Vaccinating Homebound Persons [Section 5.1]:** In North Carolina, there are estimated to be as many as over 97,000 homebound persons. Best practices for vaccine providers are described and include coordinating with other health care providers and community-based organizations to identify and vaccinate homebound persons in your community.
- **Vaccination of Minors [Section 5.2]** Of the currently FDA authorized COVID-19 vaccines, Pfizer's vaccine can be used in people as young as 16 years, while Moderna and Janssen (J&J) are authorized only for adults (18 years and older) at this time. As more 16-17 year old individuals become eligible, it is critical that vaccine providers ensure that any eligible individuals under 18 only receive a Pfizer vaccine. NC General Statute 90-21.5. gives minors with decisional capacity ability to consent for COVID-19 vaccination under [G.S. 90-21.5](#) [See Section 11.2]
- **Ancillary Kit Deficiency Reporting [Section 12.9]:** Vaccine providers are encouraged to report any issues with equipment in the ancillary kits that are shipped with their federal vaccine orders. Please see more information about the four reporting steps to ensure that enough information is gathered to monitor trends in problems with packaging and shipping.
- **Promoting Equitable Vaccine Distribution (Section 18.0):** North Carolina has made a commitment to equity. Equity is embedded in every aspect of vaccine operations, beginning with holding ourselves and our vaccine providers publicly accountable. It continues to be the responsibility of all vaccine providers to ensure equitable access to vaccines.
 - **Equity Tip:** Ensure adequate language access for individuals seeking COVID-19 vaccination. A new service email address is available for vaccine providers requesting assistance with



connections to resources to better serve individuals with communications needs (e.g., Spanish, ASL, blind): communication.access@dhhs.nc.gov

- **CVMS Updates [Section 7.4]:**
 - Additional enhancements continue to be implemented for CVMS. Interested providers now have the opportunity to use an optional CVMS Scheduling tool for recipients to schedule and cancel appointments, which integrates with the myspot.nc.gov application.
 - CVMS Direct is a new integration solution allowing providers to seamlessly connect COVID vaccination records with CVMS through a standardized flat file from Electronic Health Records (EHRs) that pass through the HIE (Health Information Exchange) and are loaded directly to CVMS.
 - Providers can connect with the Virtual Agent to resolve common questions and inquiries about COVID-19 vaccine and CVMS.
- **Federally Supported Vaccination Site in North Carolina [Section 8.2.3].** The Federally Support Vaccination Site with FEMA launched March 10, 2021 in Guilford County and will operate for eight weeks. Individuals can go to gsomassvax.org to schedule their appointment or call the COVID-19 Vaccine Help Center at 1-888-675-4567.
- **Updated Vaccine Allocation [Section 17.1]:** Due to the hard work of vaccine providers in NC, we are now in a new phase of slowly improving vaccine supply and increasing percentages of county populations now vaccinated. New providers, including many new pharmacies and primary care providers, are receiving vaccine allocations to help expand vaccine reach throughout North Carolina. Additionally, over the past several weeks the federal government has prioritized adding several new channels by which vaccine comes into the state — including programs like the federal retail pharmacy partnership, allocations to federally qualified health centers, and more. At the same time, demand still exceeds supply. To best address where we currently are, NCDHHS is evolving the vaccine allocation strategy for the current stage, which continues to maintain a focus on speed and ensuring equitable vaccine distribution to historically marginalized populations. The updated methodology provides vaccine across the state in areas where it is most needed and helps ensure access to those that are not yet vaccinated. New baseline allocations will be based on the percentage of residents in a county not yet vaccinated, which is a shift from previous baseline allocations that were based on the number of residents in a county. The next three-week period will continue the two-part allocation process, which includes a “baseline allocation with equity doses” and a “set-aside allocation.” 97% of total first doses will go to the baseline allocation. The remaining 3% of first doses will go to the set-aside allocation to support long-term care settings, state facilities and community vaccination events.