



August 4, 2021

Dear Primary Care Provider Partners,

As Ohio is experiencing an increase in COVID-19 cases, and the highly contagious Delta variant is becoming an increasing threat, the Ohio Department of Health is asking for your continued partnership in protecting Ohio's adults and adolescents.

Primary care providers can play a pivotal role in increasing vaccine access, building vaccine confidence, engaging communities with lower vaccine uptake, and reaching underserved populations. As Ohio's COVID-19 vaccination strategy has evolved to a more community-based approach, partnerships with Ohioans' most trusted sources in healthcare are essential.

According to a recent survey by the Kaiser Family Foundation, half of individuals who indicated they are taking a "wait and see" approach to COVID-19 vaccination also indicated they would be more likely to get the vaccine if it were offered during a routine medical visit. Thank you to primary care practices who have already been able to enroll as COVID-19 vaccination providers, and thank you to all providers who have been working tirelessly to educate patients on the importance and safety of COVID-19 vaccines. Your efforts have helped to save lives, and will continue to save lives.

Reduced Barriers to Enrollment in the COVID-19 Vaccination Program

The Ohio Department of Health understands that COVID-19 vaccination provider enrollment and requirements may seem complicated and perhaps daunting. We would like to share recent actions taken to reduce potential barriers to enrollment while continuing to adhere to federal requirements for vaccination providers:

- Providers can limit vaccination to their established patients only.
- Providers are no longer required to use their vaccine supply within seven days. Providers can set their own timetables and vaccination schedules with complete flexibility.
- Providers now place their own orders for vaccine.
- Providers can receive smaller vaccine shipments.
 - The Ohio Department of Health is using a warehouse and staff to break apart and redistribute doses in smaller packages. The Pfizer vaccine can be ordered in packages with as few as 30 doses.
- COVID-19 vaccines can be safely and correctly stored in freezer and refrigerator storage units that are monitored with a proper temperature monitoring device. Ultra-cold storage capability is not a requirement.

- Pfizer vaccine:
 - Freezer Storage: Between -25°C and -15°C (-13°F and 5°F). It can be in the freezer for two weeks.
 - Refrigerator Storage: It can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 31 days.
- Moderna vaccine:
 - Freezer Storage: Between -50°C and -15°C (-58°F and 5°F). It can be stored in the freezer until the expiration date.
 - Refrigerator Storage: Between 2°C and 8°C (36°F and 46°F). It can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 30 days.
- Johnson & Johnson vaccine:
 - Refrigerator Storage: Between 2°C and 8°C (36°F and 46°F). It can be stored in the refrigerator until the expiration date.

Providers are urged to **never miss an opportunity to vaccinate a patient**, even if it means some doses in a vial will not get used. ODH has updated its [Guidance for COVID-19 Vaccine Providers on Maximizing Vaccinations While Minimizing Wasted Doses](#). The top priority is getting more vaccine doses administered to save lives.

How to Enroll as a COVID-19 Vaccine Provider

Requirements to become a COVID-19 vaccination provider and information about how to enroll are available on the [ODH Ohio COVID-19 Provider Enrollment webpage](#).

- Only one individual needs to complete the enrollment process per office site/location. This can be the office manager or another designated staff member.
- Individual healthcare providers in a combined practice do not need to enroll separately.
- Once a site is enrolled, all individual providers at the practice site who are legally authorized to administer vaccines can administer the COVID-19 vaccine.

ODH staff are available to assist providers with the enrollment process. Please reach out for assistance at the following contact information.

Contact Us

If you have any questions about enrolling as a COVID-19 vaccination provider or provider expectations, please call the Ohio Department of Health's Provider Call Center between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday through Friday at 1-844-9ODHVAX (1-844-963-4829) or email COVIDVACCINE@odh.ohio.gov.

Thank you for your efforts to help protect Ohioans and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Sincerely,



Bruce Vanderhoff, MD, MBA
Chief Medical Officer
Ohio Department of Health