

COVID-19 VACCINE PROGRAM

PROVIDER NEWSLETTER

12/15/2021

Highlights

Vaccination Updates

- 418, 146 vaccine doses were administered in the past week, including:
 - 214,343 booster doses administered in the past week.
 - 64,821 pediatric doses administered in the past week.
 - 0.9% increase in vaccines administered from previous week

Vaccine Ordering

- All providers enrolled with the PA DOH's COVID-19 vaccine program can place requests for COVID-19 vaccines by logging directly into PA-SIIS.
- Currently, the following vaccine configurations are available for ordering through PA-SIIS.
 - 1170 dose tray of purple cap Pfizer (for 12 and older)
 - 100 dose tray of orange cap Pfizer (for 5–11-year-old)
 - 100 dose trays of Moderna
 - 100 dose trays of Janssen
- All vaccine administrations must be reported in PA SIIS within 24 hours.

Education

[Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers Administering Vaccine](#)

[CDC COVID-19 Vaccine Webinar Series](#)

[CDC's COVID Vaccine Provider Education and Training](#)

[CDC's COVID Vaccine Inventory Management Best Practices](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccine: Quick Reference Guide for Healthcare Professionals \(cdc.gov\)](#)

[COVID-19 Vaccination for Children 5-11 Years Old](#)

[Communication Resources for COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

[Resources for Jurisdictions, Clinics, and Organizations](#)

Best Practice Refresher

Transition to Pfizer Tris-sucrose Adult Vaccine Formulation (gray cap)

Starting the week of December 20, a new formulation of Pfizer vaccine for adults/adolescents will be available. This formulation involves some changes to ordering and handling:

Pfizer Tris-sucrose Adult Formulation will have a distinctive **GRAY** cap and:

- Will be available in smaller 300-dose configurations.
- **Does not** require diluent.
- May be stored at 2-8°C (36-46°F) for up to 10 weeks.
- Can be used on individuals 12 years of age and older.

The USG will retire the current Pfizer 1170 and 450 packs and transition to the Pfizer-Tris adult formulation (300 Minimum Dose Quantity) for jurisdictions and federal entities.

Jurisdictions should utilize existing inventory to the greatest extent possible prior to ordering the Pfizer Tris-Sucrose Adult Vaccine Formulation

Key Considerations:

- Jurisdictions and providers should maximize use of all remaining Pfizer doses prior to ordering the Tris-Adult formulation.
- Provider sites should ideally carry only one Pfizer adult formulation at a time.
- Provider sites that previously utilized the Pfizer thermal shipping containers for temporary storage must prepare for use of an ULT freezer or refrigerator with the new Pfizer Tris formulation; the smaller shipping containers used with the Pfizer-Tris adult formulation cannot be utilized for storage.
- To avoid mistakes during this period of transition when both products may be in circulation, these products should not be offered/administered at the same time.

Description	Formulations		
	Dilute Prior to Use	Do Not Dilute	Dilute Prior to Use
Age Group	12 years and older	12 years and older	5 to <12 years*
Vial Cap Color	PURPLE  	GRAY (Coming soon)  	ORANGE  
Dose	30 mcg	30 mcg	10 mcg
Injection Volume	0.3 mL	0.3 mL	0.2 mL
Fill Volume (before dilution)	0.45 mL	2.25 mL	1.3 mL
Amount of Diluent* Needed per Vial	1.8 mL	NO DILUTION	1.3 mL
Doses per Vial	6 doses per vial (after dilution)	6 doses per vial	10 doses per vial (after dilution)
Storage Conditions			
ULT Freezer (-90°C to -60°C)	9 months	6 months	6 months
Freezer (-25°C to -15°C)	2 weeks	N/A	N/A
Refrigerator (2°C to 8°C)	1 month	10 weeks	10 weeks

*Diluent: 0.9% sterile Sodium Chloride Injection, USP (non-bacteriostatic; DO NOT USE OTHER DILUENTS

Figure 1 • Different formulations of Pfizer vaccines

Holiday Ordering Cadence

Christmas

- No vaccine deliveries will occur Thursday, December 23 through Monday, December 27.
- If you need vaccine for clinics scheduled on the holiday weekend, submit your orders early, preferably the week of December 13.

Normal deliveries will be carried out on Tuesday, December 28 and Wednesday, December 29 only.

New Year Holiday

- No vaccine deliveries will occur from Thursday, December 30 through Tuesday, Jan 4.
- If you need vaccine for clinics scheduled on the holiday weekend, submit your orders early, preferably the week of December 13 in anticipation of the limited work hours during Christmas week.

CMS Announces COVID-19 Vaccine, Testing, and Counseling Policies

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced December 2nd that it is now requiring states to cover COVID-19 vaccine counseling visits in which health care providers talk to families about the importance of kids' vaccination. CMS will now consider certain COVID-19 vaccine counseling visits for children and youth to be COVID-19 vaccine administration, for which state expenditures can be federally matched at 100% through the last day of the first quarter that begins one year after the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency, under the American Rescue Plan (ARP). CMS will match COVID-19 vaccine counseling-only visits at the ARP 100% federal match rate only when they are provided to children and youth under age 21 as part of the Medicaid Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit.

CMS also issued a news alert encouraging those with Medicare who are fully vaccinated to get a booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. People with Medicare pay nothing when they get the COVID-19 vaccine and booster and there is no applicable copayment, coinsurance, or deductible.

For more details, please visit:

- <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/press-releases/biden-harris-administration-makes-100-federal-medicaid-matching-funds-available-state-expenditures>.
- <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/news-alert/cms-encourages-people-medicare-get-covid-19-vaccine-booster-shot>.
- <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/12/02/fact-sheet-president-biden-announces-new-actions-to-protect-americans-against-the-delta-and-omicron-variants-as-we-battle-covid-19-this-winter/>.

Vaccinate with Confidence

Vaccination coverage for children remains high in most U.S. states, and the safety and effectiveness of vaccines are deemed by most parents to be reliable and safe. The spread of myths and misinformation, however, has put some communities at risk.

False information can cause vaccination coverage to drop and outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases to increase. To build vaccine confidence, providers can:

- Encourage proactive communication with parents of children under 12 years of age.
- Assist parents with their questions, concerns, and needs.
- Discuss potential side effects of the vaccination with parents and caregivers, explaining the relative risk of a side effect in comparison to COVID-19 complications.

Providers may find it helpful to consult several resources for guidance. These are some examples:

- The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has created a [vaccine campaign toolkit for COVID-19](#).
- The November issue of the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)'s [Parent's PACK](#) offers information on the vaccination of children aged 5-11 with COVID-19.

Upcoming Events

In preparation for the retirement of Pfizer 1170 (a.k.a. purple cap) and the launch of Pfizer-Tris' adult formulation (a.k.a. gray cap) the Pfizer training team is updating their webinars.

Sessions will now include information regarding the DO NOT DILUTE / Gray Cap formulation of the vaccine for individuals 12 years of age and older.

To access current and future training sessions, please

visit: <https://www.pfizermedicalinformation.com/en-us/medical-updates>

These sessions will be **updated** to reflect new information.

Contact Us

For PA SIIS related inquiries

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For all other COVID-19 vaccine related inquiries

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