

COVID -19 VACCINE PROVIDER

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

4/30/2021

Highlights

Policy

- Effective 4/23/2021 as per the recommendation from CDC's ACIP meeting, the pause on Johnson & Johnson's (Janssen) COVID-19 vaccine has been lifted by PA DOH. Health care providers administering the vaccine and vaccine recipients or caregivers should review the [Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers Administering Vaccine \(Vaccination Providers\)](#) and [Fact Sheet for Recipients and Caregivers](#), which have been revised to include information about the risk of a very rare blood clot that has occurred in a very small number of people who have received the Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) COVID-19 Vaccine.
- To simplify the vaccine ordering processes, starting next week, DOH will be **discontinuing the differentiation between 1st and 2nd doses**. We expect this will simplify the process significantly for all providers and provide more flexibility in a time where sustained patient demand cannot be expected. Please refer to the **"Process Update on Vaccine Allocation"** section of this newsletter for detailed information.
- Effective 4/30, all provider calls on Fridays will include an equity segment in which selected providers will showcase their equity best practices for the next few weeks. For more information on our equity initiative, please refer to this [toolkit](#).

Data

- Effective 4/23, the COVID-19 vaccine dashboard has been updated to include details on demographics of vaccine recipients. This update displays a county-specific view of individuals vaccinated by race, ethnicity, gender, and age. It also includes a county ranking of the percent of residents in each county that have received at least one dose of a vaccine.
- This week, a total of 8,326,640 doses will have been allocated through May 1.
- As of 4/29/2021, a total of 8,330,129 doses has been administered in the jurisdiction of PA DOH. 3,349,820 individuals have been fully vaccinated whereas 1,907,763 individuals have been partially vaccinated against COVID.

- According to the CDC, as of Thursday morning, April 29, Pennsylvania vaccine providers have administered first doses of vaccine to 48.5 % of its eligible population, and the state ranks 10th among all 50 states for first doses administered by percentage of population.

Education

[FDA's FAQs on Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

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

[Fact Sheet for Recipients and Caregivers](#)

[CDC Health Alert for Health Care Providers](#)

[Johnson & Johnson Granting EUA Amendment \(April 23, 2021\)](#)

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

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

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

[CDC's COVID Vaccination Toolkit](#)

“In response to concerns of access barriers some immigrants are facing regarding documentation requests prior to receiving COVID-19 vaccination, and individuals inappropriately being sent bills for COVID-19 vaccine fees, HRSA developed and is posting two fact sheets to help both patients and providers better understand their rights and responsibilities regarding [access to COVID-19 vaccines](#). The COVID-19 vaccines are free to all individuals living in the United States and these resources will help to empower patients and educate providers on this fact.”

(CMS, 2021)

Fact Sheets: [Patient Fact Sheet \(English | Spanish\)](#) [Provider Fact Sheet \(English | Spanish\)](#)

Best Practice Refresher

Reminders

Please remember that the enrolled COVID-19 vaccine providers are expected to:

- determine the demand and need of vaccine at your facility and make requests accordingly;
- fill out the weekly vaccine request survey on time if you want to have vaccines allocated to your site;
- request vaccines you intend to administer within next 7- 10 days—cancellations after submitting a survey and approval of allocation can't be guaranteed;
- keep track of the vaccine's expiry date and rotate the stock as needed, please refer to our Vaccine provider newsletter from last week for best practices on proper [storage and handling of vaccines](#);
- be mindful about ways to reduce unnecessary vaccine wastage;
- not schedule first dose clinics if an allocation has never been made to your site.;
- be present to receive vaccine shipments at a given date, time, and location;

- receive vaccine shipments delivered to your facility, store them as appropriate and immediately notify DOH of the situation (if situations when shipments are received by error);
- coordinate partnership efforts with school districts, local colleges or reach out to county leadership to see if they can redistribute the vaccines they no longer can use; and
- administer second doses of vaccine to any college students who request it even if they did not receive their first dose at your facility so that we can encourage college students to get both doses of vaccine.

Inventory Management

- Providers should be able to divide your vaccine inventory as first and second doses as needed and as appropriate.
- On a weekly basis, you should review missed appointments or other reasons for scheduled doses not being used and repurpose those doses as appropriate.
- Second doses should not be held or saved for patients who have not returned after 42 days following their first dose; these should be used as first doses.

Scheduling Second Doses

- Schedule second dose appointments to occur during the appropriate timeframe at the time of first dose appointment or immediately after first dose is received.
- Provide second-dose reminders via electronic (e.g., v-safe, VaxText, reminders through IIS) and/or paper means (e.g., vaccination reminder card)

Reducing Vaccine Wastage

- Since thawed vaccine cannot be re-frozen, please thaw the amount of vaccine that you need.
- Don't forget to label an open vial with time and date its opened.
- To reduce vaccine waste, please store vaccine in a refrigerated cooler whenever possible instead of leaving vaccine out in room temperature.
- Only prepare the vaccines when you are ready to administer them.
- Pre -drawing of vaccines in a syringe before a recipient checks in is not recommended.
- If there is a no show, please call people in waitlist and check if they can be at your site within a given time frame. Offer vaccines to your staff if they haven't already been vaccinated. If all these options run out, offer vaccines to walk- in recipients who are eligible and do not have any contraindication to the vaccine. (Source – CDC, 2021)

Process Update on Vaccine Allocation

1. What is the new allocation process update?

To simplify the vaccine ordering processes, starting next week, PA DOH will be discontinuing the differentiation between 1st and 2nd doses. We expect this will simplify the process significantly for you and provide more flexibility in a time where sustained patient demand cannot be expected.

2. What does it mean for providers? When is the new process effective?

On Tuesday of next week (May 4th) you will be notified of your 2nd dose allocation, and at the end of next week (Thu May 6th / Fri May 7th) you will receive the last shipment of “second doses” you have requested in the request form that closed this past Tuesday (April 27th). These doses are **intended to be used as second dose** only for the week of May 10th.

3. Will there be a change in the timeline of vaccine request survey opening/closing and the total window when providers can request vaccines?

Yes. Tomorrow on May 1, a new request form will open for 1st doses to be administered for the week of May 10th – the process for 1st doses does not change. The form will be open until Tuesday 8pm. Request surveys will be available under the same link as before:

<https://form.jotform.com/210685174478161>

4. What can providers expect over the next two weeks?

Administration week of May 10:

- Request form for **1st dose only** due Tuesday, May 4 at 8pm EST.
 - Please request **1st doses** needed for the week of May 10.
 - Confirmation letter sent on Friday, May 7; delivery expected Mon-Tue May 10-May 11
- 2nd dose delivery Thursday, May 6, or Friday, May 7 – for use in the week of May 10.
 - Request for these 2nd doses already submitted this past Tuesday.

Administration week of May 17 (and going forward):

- Request form due Tuesday, May 11 at 8pm EST.
- Please request **total doses needed for appointments scheduled in the week May 17**– no need to differentiate between 1st and 2nd doses.

5. When will the providers be notified of allocation? When can the delivery of vaccines be expected?

Going forward you will always be notified of your allocation on Friday, and receive the delivery on Monday/Tuesday – like the current process for 1st doses

6. What are the expectations from providers with this new change in place?

We expect you to be **in charge** of your inventory management. You should request enough doses to meet **BOTH** 1st and 2nd dose needs for the **following week** - considering current inventory and upcoming appointments.

7. Does it change the administration reporting into PA SIIS?

No, it doesn't. Administration date reporting requirement is still the same. Please note that this change only applies to requests and allocation. 1st and 2nd dose still need to be distinguished when transmitting records to PA-SIIS.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

COVID- 19 Vaccine All Provider Call - Date: May 7th Time: 12 – 1 pm

COVID- 19 Vaccine All Provider Call - Date: May 14th Time: 12 – 1 pm

Contact Us

For PA SIIS related inquiries

email: RA-DHPASIS@PA.GOV

Phone: 1- 877-774-4748

For all other COVID-19 vaccine related inquiries

email: RA-DHCOVIDVAX@PA.GOV

Phone:1-877-724-3258

Useful Links

[Vaccine Dashboard](#)

[Vaccine Finder Map](#)

[Personnel Authorized to Administer COVID Vaccine in PA](#)

[Provider Resources and FAQs](#)