

## Pfizer COVID-19 Booster Information

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA), as well as the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) have authorized the Pfizer COVID-19 Booster for individuals 65 years of age and older, individuals 18-64 years of age at risk for severe COVID-19 due to underlying medical conditions, and individuals 18-64 years of age who are at increased risk for COVID-19 because of occupational or institutional settings who have previously received the Pfizer vaccine. Based on federal guidance, long-term care facility residents and staff are eligible to receive their booster shot at least 6 months after their second dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine.

Massachusetts leads the nation in vaccine administration. The COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective in reducing the risk of severe disease, hospitalization, and death, including against the widely circulating Delta variant. The CDC recommends that protection from COVID-19 is improved with the addition of a booster shot, especially for individuals at higher risk including long-term care residents. The Administration has worked with health care providers, retail pharmacies and community partners to ensure the availability of hundreds of locations for eligible residents to receive the authorized Pfizer COVID-19 booster.

Vaccinating long-term care facility residents and staff against COVID-19 is a crucial step in preventing the spread of COVID-19. The Administration will continue to make vaccines widely available and provide support as needed to administer booster doses within long-term care facilities including nursing homes and rest homes.

The Department of Public Health (DPH) has been actively implementing a plan to ensure that eligible long-term care residents and staff receive booster doses, now that federal agencies, including the FDA and CDC, authorized them for COVID-19 vaccination. To protect the health and safety of all long-term care residents and staff from COVID-19, DPH is prioritizing onsite administration of COVID-19 booster doses at long-term care facilities.

DPH has been working with long-term care facilities and their pharmacy partners to ensure facilities have the necessary capacity and resources to provide COVID-19 booster doses onsite. DPH expects facilities to have booster doses administered to eligible residents and staff by the end of October through one of three onsite options:

### **Partnerships with LTC Pharmacies for Booster Distribution**

To provide flexibility in terms of the timing of the administration of booster doses, long-term care facilities may elect to have their own clinical staff administer booster doses to residents and staff onsite. Pharmacies will be distributing COVID-19 vaccine booster

doses to their long-term care facility clients that have indicated that they have the capacity to store and administer vaccine to their residents and staff.

### **Partnerships with LTC Pharmacies for Booster Distribution and Administration**

Some long-term care facilities have reported to their pharmacy partner that they need support in administering booster doses to their residents and staff; in these instances, pharmacies distributing COVID-19 vaccine booster doses to their long-term care facility clients may support in administering the vaccine similar to onsite flu clinics.

### **State provided resources for distribution and administration:**

For all other facilities needing onsite support, the Commonwealth will provide resources to help vaccinate residents and staff onsite with state-contracted clinician teams, otherwise referred to as Rapid Response Teams (RRTs).

For more specific information on when your family member or loved one will receive a booster dose please contact their long-term care facility.

As we rollout boosters across the Commonwealth, our focus is two-fold. First, to increase uptake in first and second doses in residents not yet vaccinated. Getting vaccinated remains the most important thing individuals can do to protect themselves, their families, and their community. Second, fully vaccinated residents should receive a COVID-19 booster shot when they are eligible and as authorized by the CDC. At this time, only the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine has been authorized as a booster.

The COVID-19 booster is safe, effective, and free. You do not need an ID or health insurance to access a booster. Additional information on the COVID-19 booster, including FAQs, can be found at [mass.gov/COVID19booster](https://mass.gov/COVID19booster).