

ALASKA  
**COVID-19**  
**VACCINE TASK FORCE**

**Special Update: December 7, 2020**

<http://Covidvax.Alaska.gov>

COVID-19 vaccine is a rapidly changing topic, and we can expect further developments as approach distribution of vaccine in our state.

**Vaccine Allocation Updates:**

According to current federal government estimates, Alaska's initial allocations of vaccines could include:

- **Pfizer: 35,100 doses**
- **Moderna: 17,900 doses**

These vaccine doses will be distributed statewide among public, private, and Tribal health systems. Alaska's distribution process will not include military service members, who will be vaccinated separately through a federal allocation.

**Initial Allocation Recommendations**

On December 1, the CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice (ACIP) [released recommendations](#) for groups to be vaccinated in the initial phase of the COVID-19 vaccination program. The first phase of vaccination, referred to as Phase 1A by planners, will focus on health care personnel serving patients with either confirmed or suspected COVID-19, along with staff and residents of long-term care facilities.

On December 3, the Alaska COVID-19 Vaccine Allocation Committee met to review ACIP recommendations. The committee unanimously determined a portion of the groups to be included in Phase 1A: hospital-based front-line healthcare workers at highest risk for COVID-19 infection; long-term care facility residents and staff; EMS and fire personnel; Community Health Aide Practitioners (CHA/Ps); and individuals who are required to perform vaccinations.

Alaska's committee plans to meet again December 10 to identify additional groups that would be incorporated in Phase 1a.

More information about Alaska's COVID-19 Vaccine Allocation Committee is available [here](#).

**First Vaccine Arrival Timeline**

The first shipments of COVID-19 vaccines are expected to arrive in Alaska within the next two weeks. If the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) authorizes a vaccine, the Alaska COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force will begin distributing the vaccine to Phase 1A COVID-19 vaccine providers in December and January. The FDA is scheduled to meet on December 10 (Pfizer) and December 17 (Moderna) to review EUA applications for COVID-19 vaccines. An EUA allows the FDA to make a product available during a declared state of emergency before it has a full license.

ALASKA  
**COVID-19**  
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Regular shipments of vaccines are expected to continue throughout 2021. Distributing vaccines across Alaska is a large, coordinated effort and the timeline will change based on input from state, Tribal, federal, military, and community partners.

### **Provider Enrollment**

Providers who have fully enrolled in the COVID-19 Vaccination Program will be eligible to receive a portion of the first shipment. As of December 4, 265 health care providers are fully enrolled. Clinics, pharmacies, and hospitals are encouraged to [enroll](#) to be included in future distribution planning. The Alaska COVID Vaccine Task Force communicates regularly with enrolled providers to provide updates and technical assistance. For assistance with provider enrollment or to connect with your Technical Assistance Advisor, email [covid19vaccine@alaska.gov](mailto:covid19vaccine@alaska.gov).

### **Trainings for Enrolled Providers**

Each facility Vaccine Coordinator and Back-up Vaccine Coordinator is required to [complete the required trainings](#).

### **Communications and Education Resources**

The COVID-19 Communication and Education Workgroup are active on social media and preparing materials for community partners. The following materials are found under Information for Healthcare Workers: <http://covidvax.alaska.gov>

- Written messages for COVID-19 vaccine conversations
- Materials and signage to promote Point of Dispensing (POD) clinics

### **State of Alaska COVID-19 Vaccine Regional Planning Technical Assistance Advisors**

Our team of Technical Assistance Advisors are available to provide individualized outreach and support to help with the community's planning efforts.

- **Hospitals** – Stephanie Holmquist [Stephanie.holmquist@alaska.gov](mailto:Stephanie.holmquist@alaska.gov)
- **Community Health Centers** – Wendy Allen [Wendy.allen@alaska.gov](mailto:Wendy.allen@alaska.gov)
- **Pharmacies/LTCF** – Erin Narus [Erin.narus@alaska.gov](mailto:Erin.narus@alaska.gov); Kara King [kaking@anthc.org](mailto:kaking@anthc.org)
- **Department of Corrections** – Charles Pelton [Charles.pelton@alaska.gov](mailto:Charles.pelton@alaska.gov)

ALASKA  
**COVID-19**  
**VACCINE TASK FORCE**

**Long-Term Care Facility Infographic: December 9, 2020**

<http://Covidvax.Alaska.gov>

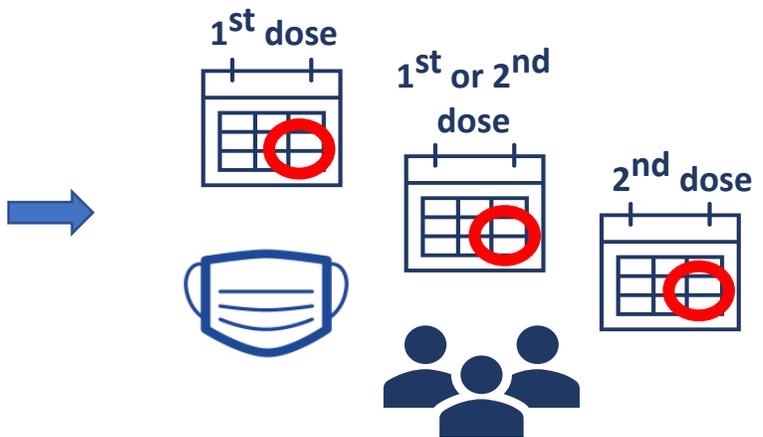
CDC Federal Long-Term Care Facility  
(LTCF) Pharmacy Partnership  
**Activated.**  
[12/08/2020]



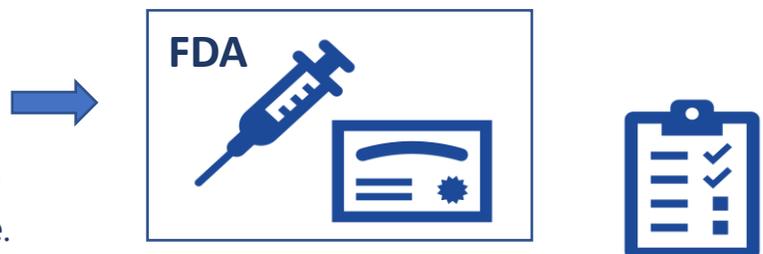
Federal and Local  
LTCF Pharmacy Partners begin initial  
outreach to matched LTCFs to  
provide information about the  
program. Federal Pharmacy  
Partners (CVS & Walgreens) provide  
webinars.



Pharmacy Partners work with LTCFs  
directly to schedule up to three (3)  
onsite vaccine clinic dates,  
appropriately spaced, to vaccinate  
residents and staff.



Vaccine authorized by the FDA.  
[Anticipated – Pfizer 12/10; Moderna 12/17]  
LTCFs assist pharmacy partners  
obtaining consent for vaccination.  
LTCFs provide roster of individuals  
desiring vaccination and consents to  
Pharmacy Partners prior to clinic date.



Onsite vaccination clinics with  
Federal Partners held on or after  
12/28/2020. Pharmacy performs  
required reporting.



ALASKA  
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**Federal Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program  
for COVID-19 Vaccination**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Centers for Disease Control (CDC) is [partnering](#) with **CVS and Walgreens across the nation, including Alaska**, to offer on-site COVID-19 vaccination services for **residents and staff** of nursing homes and assisted living facilities once vaccination is recommended for them. Under the federal partnership, the federal partners have agreed to provide free, on-site COVID vaccine services to facilities within 75 miles of one of their pharmacies. In Alaska, this included drivable communities within a 75-mile radius of Fairbanks/North Pole, Wasilla, Palmer, Anchorage, and Soldotna.

The CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice (ACIP) [released recommendations](#) which specifically recognized that vaccines that “require cold and ultracold storage, specialized handling, and large minimum order requirements are most feasibly maintained in centralized vaccination clinics, such as acute health care settings, or through the federal Pharmacy Partnership for Long-term Care Program.”<sup>1</sup>

In late October, a survey link was sent from CDC to Long-Term Care Facilities (LTCFs) – [Skilled Nursing Facilities](#) and [Assisted Living Homes](#) – across the state to allow the facilities to identify which federal pharmacy partner they would like to partner with to provide free, on-site COVID vaccine clinics. On-site is defined as at the SNF or ALH. The survey closed on Nov 6. The free clinics are designed by the CDC to be a turnkey program to:

- Schedule and coordinate on-site clinic dates directly with each facility.
- Order vaccines and associated supplies (e.g., syringes, needles, personal protective equipment).
- Ensure cold chain management for vaccine.
- Provide on-site administration of vaccine to all residents wishing to be vaccinated and any staff who desire vaccination but have not yet been vaccinated elsewhere.

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<sup>1</sup> Dooling K, McClung N, Chamberland M, et al. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices’ Interim Recommendation for Allocating Initial Supplies of COVID-19 Vaccine — United States, 2020. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep.* ePub: 3 December 2020. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6949e1>.

ALASKA  
**COVID-19**  
**VACCINE TASK FORCE**

**Special Update: December 9, 2020**

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- Report required vaccination data to the local, state, and federal jurisdictions within 72 hours of administering each dose.
- Adhere to all applicable CMS COVID-19 testing requirements for LTCF staff.

On Dec 4, the state had the opportunity to add any additional [Assisted Living Homes](#) that met the new ACIP recommendations from the ACIP Committee's Dec 1 meeting into the federal program. After Dec 4, no new facilities were able to be added and CDC locked the program for new entries. Based on the new ACIP recommendations, approximately 300 additional [Assisted Living Homes](#) who had not had the opportunity to sign-up for the program in Oct were opted-in. This opt-in gives facilities the opportunity to be contacted by a matched federal partner – Walgreens or CVS – and to receive free, on-site COVID vaccine administration services for their residents and staff. **All on-site vaccine clinic dates at LTCFs are pre-planned between the facility's administrator/designated point-of-contact and the pharmacy. Pharmacies will not show up unannounced.** Residents and staff are not obligated to receive the vaccine during these clinics. Individuals are given the independent decision to receive the vaccine; for individuals who have someone assisting with healthcare decision making, such as a guardian.

The State activated the Federal Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program on Dec 8. The State has provided the federal partners a portion of their Pfizer COVID Vaccine allocation for this effort to vaccinate residents and staff of LTCFs. The State recognizes that staff at LTCFs may desire to get vaccinated on different days. To assist, the State is working with local COVID vaccine enrolled pharmacies to provide community-positioned (i.e., off-site) COVID vaccine clinics for LTC and EMS staff. This additional flexibility will provide multiple opportunities for staff to receive COVID vaccination.

General questions about the program may be sent to [COVID19vaccine@alaska.gov](mailto:COVID19vaccine@alaska.gov); please include "LTCF" in the subject line. If you have questions for your pharmacy partner about their specific process, please reach out to them directly using the contact information provided in your welcome materials.

ALASKA  
**COVID-19**  
**VACCINE TASK FORCE**

**Long-Term Care Facility Vaccine FAQs: December 11, 2020**

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	<p><b>What is the Federal Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program?</b></p> <p>The Federal Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care <a href="#">Program</a> is a turnkey program offered by the CDC to Long-Term Care Facilities (<a href="#">Skilled Nursing Facilities</a> and <a href="#">Assisted Living Homes</a>) within states to provide end-to-end COVID vaccine services when vaccine is authorized by the FDA and recommended for use in those populations.</p> <p>You can see more <a href="#">Frequently Asked Questions</a> about the Federal Partnership on the CDC website.</p> <p>CVS has provided a <a href="#">website</a> to help with questions about their program. The website includes access to an on-demand <a href="#">webinar</a>.</p> <p>Walgreens will be providing additional information in their email welcome packets.</p>
	<p><b>I am a Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) or Assisted Living Home (ALH) who filled out a survey to select a Federal Pharmacy Partner. I selected CVS or Walgreens. When will the pharmacy call me to schedule our on-site vaccine clinics?</b></p> <p>The Federal Pharmacy Partners (Walgreens and CVS) are beginning to contact matched Skilled Nursing Facility and Assisted Living Home points of contact that were entered in the survey this week.</p>
	<p><b>I am a Skilled Nursing Facility or Assisted Living Home who filled out a survey to select a Federal Pharmacy Partner and selected CVS or Walgreens, but there is no CVS or Walgreens within 75 miles. When will a pharmacy call me to schedule our on-site vaccine clinics?</b></p> <p>For those facilities outside of the federal pharmacy partnership, you will be receiving contact from a local pharmacy partner within the next week.</p>

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	<p><b>Help! I am a licensed <a href="#">Assisted Living Home (ALH)</a>, but I did not fill out a survey to select a Federal Pharmacy Partner. Will a pharmacy still call me?</b></p> <p>When ACIP expanded the recommended groups to be considered first for COVID vaccine the first week of December, the State added any Assisted Living Homes to the Federal Pharmacy Partnership list who had not had an opportunity to complete the survey. The Assisted Living Home points of contact listed with the State’s Residential Licensing <a href="#">Assisted Living Home Program</a> will begin to receive welcome information from their matched pharmacies this next week also.</p>
	<p><b>I am a Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) or Assisted Living Home (ALH) who would like to offer vaccine to my staff on multiple different days. What are my options?</b></p> <p>The Federal Pharmacy Partners (Walgreens and CVS) will be providing three onsite clinics (at the LTC facility) for vaccinating residents and staff, two of those clinics offering opportunities to receive the first dose of the vaccine.</p> <p>The State is also working with local pharmacy partners to provide off-site, community-based closed point-of-dispensing (POD) vaccination clinics for LTC staff across the state. Clinic dates and locations will be made available to LTC facility administrators through emails, phone calls, or other direct contact when they are scheduled (pending FDA authorization of the vaccine and arrival of the vaccine in the State).</p> <p>If you are a Skilled Nursing Facility who is partnered with Walgreens or CVS <b>and</b> you have enrolled as a COVID Vaccine Immunization Provider, you may order vaccine to specifically vaccinate your staff. Walgreens and CVS will work with you to provide vaccination services to your residents. Refer also to the CDC’s <a href="#">Frequently Asked Questions</a> webpage.</p>

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	<p><b>I have received our welcome packet from our pharmacy partner with consent forms. I have a resident who has a Public Guardian. What should I do with that consent form?</b></p> <p>The State has been providing the Office of Public Advocacy copies of the various pharmacies' vaccine consent forms. You do not need to send copies to the Public Guardian. The Office of Public Advocacy will provide signed copies of the consent to the facilities where that resident lives and to the pharmacy partner prior to the clinic date.</p> <p>If your resident has a private guardian, the consent forms must be sent to and signed by the private guardian in order for your resident to receive the vaccine.</p>
	<p><b>Can I sign the vaccine consent form now?</b></p> <p>Consent forms may not be signed until the FDA grants Emergency Use Authorization (<a href="#">EUA</a>) for a vaccine. <a href="#">Fact sheets</a> explaining the vaccine will be available after the EUA is granted.</p>
	<p><b>Which vaccine will be used by CVS and Walgreens in Alaska for the Federal Partnership Program?</b></p> <p>The State set aside allocation of Pfizer's vaccine for the Federal Pharmacy LTCF Program.</p>
	<p><b>I received a call from two different pharmacies who both say they are matched with my facility, or I have another general question. What should I do?</b></p> <p>If you have specific questions for your pharmacy partner, please use the contact information the pharmacy provided to you in your welcome information to get your question answered most efficiently.</p> <p>General questions about the LTC vaccination efforts in Alaska can be sent to <a href="mailto:COVID19vaccine@alaska.gov">COVID19vaccine@alaska.gov</a> with "LTC" in the subject line.</p>

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	<p><b>It's December 18; I haven't heard from my federal pharmacy partner?</b></p> <p>The CVS and Walgreens pharmacy partners will send out welcome information to the point-of-contact entered in the CDC survey or the contact listed with the Residential Licensing Assisted Living Program. Therefore, your pharmacy partner may have reached out to an alternate contact at your facility. Please check with the individual who was listed as the point-of-contact on the CDC survey in Oct/Nov to see if they received an email or phone call. Also double-check to make sure the email did not go to a "junk" folder.</p> <p>If you are unsuccessful in locating the welcome information, please send an email to <a href="mailto:COVID19vaccine@alaska.gov">COVID19vaccine@alaska.gov</a> with "LTC" in the subject line.</p>
	<p><b>I am working with a local pharmacy partner, but I was still contacted by CVS or Walgreens?</b></p> <p>Before declining the invitation from CVS or Walgreens, please confirm that your local pharmacy partner has <a href="#">enrolled</a> with the State and is able to order COVID vaccine. COVID vaccine during Phase 1a is only available via special ordering processes through the State Immunization Program. All pharmacies who wish to participate and order COVID vaccine during this early phase <b>must</b> be <a href="#">enrolled</a> with the State to do so.</p> <p>Some facilities selected pharmacies during the survey process that have not enrolled which means they are not able to order COVID vaccine at this time.</p> <p>Questions regarding this topic may be sent to <a href="mailto:COVID19vaccine@alaska.gov">COVID19vaccine@alaska.gov</a> with "LTC" in the subject line.</p>