

COVID-19 State Workforce Vaccination FAQs

Updated 2/18/21

Is the COVID-19 vaccination mandatory for state employees?

- No, the COVID 19 vaccination is not mandatory, but strongly encouraged.
- Because the vaccine not only helps protect vaccinated individuals but the people around them (e.g., family, friends, coworkers, etc.), everyone is encouraged to get it.
- For all the facts about the vaccine, including details on popular rumors, go to <https://covidvaccine.mo.gov/facts/>. At the bottom of the Web page, you'll also find a link to ask any questions you have about the vaccine and have them answered by public health experts. You are also encouraged to contact a healthcare provider or your local public health agency to discuss any concerns about the COVID-19 vaccine.
- For more information on the vaccine, please see [this presentation by Dr. Kimberly Thomas](#). A microbiologist and immunologist at Washington University, she explains how vaccines work, how they are developed and tested, and discusses some of the most prominent rumors circulating about these vaccines.

Who can get vaccinated right now?

People in Phase 1A, Phase 1B – Tier 1, and Phase 1B – Tier 2 are eligible.

- A complete list of who is included in each phase and tier is available at: <https://covidvaccine.mo.gov/info-graphic-alt/vaccine-availability.html>.
- Currently eligible populations include healthcare workers, first responders, emergency service providers, and others who are at risk of getting COVID-19 and/or severe health complications from the virus.

When can state employees get their vaccinations?

Like all Missourians, state employees fall into eligibility phases and tiers. This means that some team members are eligible to receive a vaccination before others, based on the work they do or because they are at increased risk for severe illness.

- A large proportion of state employees are included in Phase 1B – Tier 3 (Critical Infrastructure) or Phase 2 (Equity and Economic Recovery). These tiers are not yet eligible for vaccination.
- Specific information on state employee groups included in each phase and tier is available at <https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/pdf/so-vaccine-distribution-order.pdf>.

What if I fall into more than one phase or tier?

You are encouraged to be vaccinated according to the highest (earliest) phase or tier for which you are eligible, especially if you are considered high risk.

- If you are part of Phase 1B – Tier 2, contact a healthcare provider or your local public health agency to begin the vaccination process. You can also access the vaccination [map](#) and/or the vaccine navigation [tool](#) for additional help.
- If different paths to the vaccine are available to you, use the one that offers the earliest opportunity to receive your vaccination. For example, if you are a veteran and can schedule your vaccination through the Veterans Administration healthcare system earlier than through your workplace or other healthcare provider, you are encouraged to do so.
- Contact your department's human resources office for guidance.

How do I get my vaccinations?

A variety of paths to the vaccine are available to state employees, depending on their eligibility. The following is an overview of the different ways state employees can receive a vaccination based on the work they do:

- **DMAT Regional Events**
 - These events are open to eligible team members in Phase 1A or Phase 1B Tier 1.
 - Instructions on how to register for these events are distributed by department human resources offices to those who are eligible based on the work they do.
 - These events are only open to team members who have appointments and are pre-registered.

- **Missouri Consolidated Health Care Plan (MCHCP) Strive for Wellness Health Center Events - Planned to begin March 3** depending on vaccine availability
These events will be open only to state team members who:
 - 1) Are eligible to receive the vaccine and
 - 2) Are an enrolled subscriber in a MCHCP medical plan through Anthem
 - The events will be held at the Truman State Office Building at the Strive for Wellness Health Center in Room 478.
 - Event notification and other details will be provided by MCHCP and the Strive for Wellness Health Center
 - Team members will register online through the [myMCHCP website](#).

- **Congregate Care Events**

These events are for employees and residents of congregate care facilities within the departments of Corrections, Mental Health, and Social Services – Division of Youth Services, as well as the Missouri Veterans Commission. Department human resources offices provide event details and registration guidance to the eligible team members via email.

- **Other Paths**

If you are part of Phase 1B – Tier 2, contact a healthcare provider or your local public health agency to begin the vaccination process. You can also access the vaccination [map](#) and/or the vaccine navigation [tool](#) for additional help. As vaccine supplies increase, this map will be updated with the most current listing of vaccination sites. If you are a veteran, consider scheduling your vaccination through the Veterans Administration healthcare system.

Will someone contact me when I am eligible for the vaccine? If not, how will I know when I am eligible?

- You should first review this health order to see if you are eligible based on the work you do <https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/pdf/so-vaccine-distribution-order.pdf>.
- If you are in Phase 1B – Tier 2 in the above order (over the age of 65 or with a high risk health condition) you should contact your healthcare provider or your local public health agency to begin the vaccination process. You should not wait for a state sponsored event.

- When you are eligible based on your role, your department HR office will contact you to explain how you can register for the vaccine. If they have not done so, and you believe you should be eligible, please reach out to them.

When I am eligible, how do I register to get vaccinated at one of the events?

- Currently there are different registration processes for each of the above events. When you are eligible based on your role, your department HR office will contact you to explain how you can register for an event. If they have not done so, and you believe you should be eligible, please reach out to them.
- If you are in Phase 1B – Tier 2 in the above order (over the age of 65 or with a high risk health condition) you should contact your healthcare provider or your local public health agency to begin the vaccination process. You should not wait for a state sponsored event based on your role.

When I am eligible, can I go to my health care provider and get vaccinated instead of attending an event?

If you are in Phase 1B – Tier 2 in the above order (over the age of 65 or with a high risk health condition) you should contact your healthcare provider or your local public health agency to begin the vaccination process.

How will my health care provider know when I am eligible due to my position?

They will not know that you are eligible based on your position, they may provide you with a vaccine, but they may not. The best way to receive a vaccine due to your position putting you in an eligible tier is to register for you to attend a state sponsored event described above. If you have questions, please contact your department HR team.

If I decide to be vaccinated, do I have to get both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes! The vaccine is given in two separate doses and it is extremely important that you receive both doses to be protected against the virus. Your second dose will be scheduled when you receive the first dose. The time interval depends on which vaccine you receive:

- If you receive the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine in your first dose, you will be scheduled to receive the second dose of the same vaccine 21 days later.
- If you receive the Moderna vaccine in your first dose, you will be scheduled to receive the second dose of the same vaccine 28 days later.

What happens if I miss my appointment for the second vaccine dose?

Both vaccines can be given for a limited time beyond the recommended interval and still be effective. If you miss your scheduled second dose, you can still receive it within the extended timeframe and be protected.

- The second dose of both the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines can be given up to 42 days after the first dose and still be effective.
- If you are unable to receive your second dose as scheduled, you should notify the vaccination location as soon as possible. They will reschedule your second dose within the 42-day extended timeframe.

Other Key Messages:

- Be patient and flexible - there will be plenty of vaccine. Supplies are limited right now, but that will improve as more vaccine is produced and other manufacturers are approved. It will take time to get everyone (who wants to be) vaccinated.
- Continue the basic three steps to protecting yourself: Wear a mask, maintain social distance and wash your hands thoroughly and often.
- The best source of the most current information is [MOStopscovid.com](https://www.mostopscovid.com).