



Health Advisory for SF Vaccination Providers: Expanding Phase 1b Eligibility for COVID-19 Vaccine

February 23, 2021

The following information is issued on behalf of the SF COVID Command Center

Situation

As of 2/21/2021, 18% of San Francisco residents age ≥ 16 years, and 58% of those age ≥ 65 years, have received at least 1 dose of COVID-19 vaccine. In total, over 236,000 doses have been administered in San Francisco to those who live or work here. See the [SF COVID-19 Vaccine Data Tracker](#) for updated information. Our deep appreciation goes out to all the providers contributing in the present and future to this extremely important citywide vaccination effort.

San Francisco is following a vaccine distribution and engagement approach in accordance with the [state vaccine prioritization plan](#) that prioritizes disproportionately impacted communities, settings, and populations to ensure those eligible for vaccines within these communities are able to receive it. To date, vaccination efforts have focused on persons in:

- Phase 1a (healthcare workers; residents of long-term care, assisted living, or similar settings)
- Phase 1b Seniors (age ≥ 65 years).

As of 2/24/2021 San Francisco is expanding Phase 1b eligibility to include workers in three industry sectors who have risk of occupational exposure to SARS-CoV-2, in accordance with the state prioritization. These sectors, and the workers eligible within these sectors are detailed in the 2/14/2021 CDPH [Updated Allocation Guidelines](#). For ease of reference:

- Eligible workers in the **Education and Childcare Sector** are described in a footnote of the [Updated Allocation Guidelines](#)
- Eligible workers in the **Emergency Services Sector** are described in the [Essential Workforce Sectors](#) list, Section #2
- Eligible workers in the **Food and Agriculture Sector** are described in the [Essential Workforce Sectors](#) list, Section #3. The [Updated Allocation Guidelines](#) further clarify that any employee working in a restaurant is eligible, even if their particular job or role is not specifically listed.

Since the last Health Update (2/4/2021), vaccine supply allocated to SF has improved slightly but has continued to be limited and insufficient to meet robust demand. And, as eligibility expands to new workforce sectors, we expect that demand will continue to outstrip supply for the immediate future.



Actions Requested of SF Vaccination Providers

1. **Continue efforts to prioritize and complete vaccination** of all persons in Phase 1a and all seniors in Phase 1b, as vaccine supply allows. Outreach to your regular patients should continue in order to ensure access for those age ≥ 65 years.
2. **Extend eligibility to the additional workers specified in Phase 1b at all vaccination sites starting 2/24/2021, as vaccine supply allows.** Include all those age ≥ 18 years (≥ 16 years if using Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine) who are in the Phase 1b workforce sectors described above. Health systems and clinics vaccinating their regular patients should make efforts to identify and contact those among their patient panels who are newly eligible for COVID-19 vaccine.
3. **Use reasonable processes to verify** that persons presenting for vaccination meet eligibility criteria, while avoiding overly burdensome documentation requirements that create barriers to vaccination. Workers in different job sectors differ in the documentation available that could verify their job status. Providers may adopt methods that include but are not limited to checking work identification badges, pay stubs, or letters from employers, recognizing that in some circumstances it may be more feasible as well as more equitable to rely instead on obtaining the vaccinee's signed attestation of their workforce sector. Ultimately it is up to the vaccinating entity to decide on the appropriate process for verifying eligibility, however vaccinating sites that are serving populations and communities that are disproportionately affected by COVID-19 should ensure that access to vaccine is low-barrier. This communication will be updated should additional guidance on eligibility verification be published by CDPH.

Additional Information

Questions about Eligibility. CDPH has provided detailed descriptions of workers eligible in Phase 1b. San Francisco COVID Command does not intend to further parse or annotate those descriptions. If questions arise about whether a job class is included in Phase 1b, vaccinating providers should reference the Essential Workforce Sectors List and use their best judgment to determine eligibility. Should CDPH provide clarification on eligibility criteria, SF COVID Command will provide an update.

Referring Patients for Vaccination. Healthcare providers who are not vaccinating entities may direct their patients to <https://sf.gov/get-vaccinated-against-covid-19> to check for available vaccination locations and to schedule appointments as they become available. Other options for COVID-19 vaccination includes retail pharmacies (under a new [federal program](#)).

Provider Resources. Sample COVID-19 vaccine protocols, vaccinator FAQ, and other SFDPH-developed documents as well as links to key vaccination resources are regularly updated and available at www.sfdcp.org/covidvax-administer

Please contact covidvax@sfdph.org with questions.