



Health Update for SF Providers: COVID-19 Vaccine Access and Allocation

February 4, 2021

The following information is issued on behalf of SF COVID Command

Situation

On 1/22/2021 the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) issued [Revised Allocation Guidelines for COVID-19 Vaccine](#) to include all Phase 1a healthcare workers plus adults age 65 years and older, and further prioritizing those over 75 years of age due to limited supply.

SF COVID Command, which is a collaboration between the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH) and several other City departments, continues to follow the CDPH vaccine allocation guidance.

The current supply of COVID-19 vaccine allotted to SF is still very limited and supply may remain insufficient to meet demand for several more months.

Further, we note that SF COVID Command has allocation control over just a portion of the vaccine coming into SF; most doses are allocated directly by CDPH to several large, multi-county health systems (University of California, Dignity, Kaiser, and Sutter) without prior review by SF COVID Command or SFDPH, and those systems in turn apportion their supply to local facilities within their systems.

Please see below for several other important updates.

SF Providers Approved or Enrolling as COVID-19 Vaccination Providers

CDPH decommissioned COVID-Readi and replaced it with **CalVax** (soon to be renamed **MyCAVax**) as the enrollment and ordering system for providers seeking to administer COVID-19 vaccine.

Updated information and links are posted by SF COVID Command at www.sfcdcp.org/covidvax-getready. In addition, CDPH maintains FAQs for vaccine providers at <https://eziz.org/covid/>.

- Note: recently, the State indicated it will take a greater role in coordinating with local health departments and providers. We will continue to adapt to the quickly changing landscape and aim to keep healthcare providers informed. In the coming weeks providers may receive additional direction from the State, rather than from SF COVID Command or SFDPH.

Meanwhile, due to the very limited amount of vaccine available to our county and under the allocation control of SF COVID Command, we regret that SF COVID Command is able to allocate vaccine to only a **subset** of CalVax-approved SF healthcare providers at the current time.



Providers currently approved in CalVax may submit **requests** for vaccine (referred to in the CalVax system as “orders”). However, please be aware that at the current time, due to low vaccine supply, most such requests cannot be authorized or can at best be only partially authorized by SF COVID Command.

The guiding principles of the SF COVID Command vaccine allocation strategy include a focus on equity, speed, scale, and sustainability. Given the low supply of vaccine and the unequal impact of the disease, SF COVID Command is more likely to authorize vaccination requests from sites able to:

- Administer all allocated doses quickly and to individuals in alignment with CDC and CDPH guidelines for prioritization
- Prioritize vaccine administration to communities and neighborhoods with the highest COVID prevalence, including among individuals who do not have ready access to health care
- Commit to ongoing, weekly vaccination
- Contribute to the strategy of increasing vaccine access across the city and to all San Franciscans.

SF COVID Command will continue to allocate directly to select existing partners who are vaccinating at-risk populations directed to them by SFDPH, including health systems, federally qualified health centers and community clinics.

Due to the extremely limited supply, SF COVID Command is not currently allocating to specialty clinics and is not generally recruiting additional providers to serve as vaccinators. SFDPH may directly contact select providers serving at-risk populations to invite their participation. We are also not regularly allocating to private practice primary care providers.

Vaccination Options for SF Healthcare Workers (HCW)

“Frontline” HCW (those who have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to SARS-CoV-2 through their work in any role in direct health care or long-term care settings) are classified in Phase 1a and are eligible to receive the vaccine now.

Eligible SF HCW (those living or working in SF) who cannot be vaccinated by their employer may access vaccine at other locations, listed [here](#) and updated as additional sites become available. Please note that documentation or self-certification of eligible HCW status may be required.

Eligible SF HCW who are having difficulty scheduling appointments for vaccination may email dph.doc.outpatientunit@sfdph.org to request assistance.



Vaccination Options for SF Residents Age 65 Years and Older

SF residents age 65 years and older are now eligible to receive the vaccine, per CDPH guidelines. However, with the vaccine supply severely constrained, **demand for vaccine greatly exceeds supply right now, and many or most elderly individuals will need to wait** for vaccine supply to increase in order to receive the vaccine. Given this situation, some providers and health systems are further prioritizing people age 75 years and older. Please promote patience; as vaccine supply increases, vaccination opportunities will become more robust.

Addressing the Shortage of Vaccination Slots. In coordination with the City, our larger health and hospital systems are developing several high-volume vaccination sites, which will greatly facilitate vaccination of the public. Eligible patients may now be directed 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 will soon include retail pharmacies (under a new federal program) plus specified community clinics and neighborhood vaccination sites.

SF providers will be able to direct the majority of their eligible elderly patients to these sites, regardless of insurance type or medical home.

Additional Information and Reminders

Vaccinate Eligible Patients Only. Entities agreeing to receive COVID-19 vaccine should administer doses to patients [who are eligible within the current phases](#) and in alignment with SFCCC instructions. Providers who vaccinate outside the eligible populations are at risk of having their doses reclaimed and may not receive future allocations.

Minimize Wastage. Plan in advance to ensure that there is no waste of vaccine and that intensive and appropriate efforts are made to vaccinate eligible populations. In the event that doses are about to expire, the vaccine may be offered to persons in lower priority groups in order to avoid waste, in accordance with [CDPH allocation guidelines](#).

Use Vaccine Promptly and Report Inventory and Doses Daily. See the 2/3/2021 [CDPH Letter to Vaccination Providers](#) indicating the importance of using all available doses by the end of the week, and reporting all doses to CAIR and all inventory to VaccineFinder on a daily basis.

Opportunities to Volunteer. The City's Department of Human Resources has established a pathway for clinical and non-clinical personnel to volunteer to assist with vaccination efforts. See: <https://sfdhr.org/emergency-healthcare-volunteers>

Program Contact Information

Please contact covidvax@sfdph.org with questions.