February 9, 2021

COVID-19 Vaccine News & Info

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT


- The website of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention now has a landing page for patients on COVID-19 vaccines, including a helpful primer on 8 Things to Know About the U.S. COVID-19 Vaccination Program. The CDC will be unveiling a broader media campaign this month.

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention launched a vaccination data page with jurisdiction-level data. The page tracks the total number of COVID-19 vaccines administered in the United States. You can find the tracker [here](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html).

- The CDC and NIH have developed weekly COVID-19 state profile reports for the public. See: [New York’s data pages](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html).

- The U.S. Federal Trade Commission (FTC) is advising consumers to take the following steps to avoid becoming a victim of a coronavirus vaccine and testing scams:
  - Learn how to [tell the difference between](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html) a real contact tracer and a scammer. Legitimate tracers need health information, not money or personal financial information.
Don’t respond to texts, emails or calls about checks from the government. Here’s what you need to know.

Ignore offers for vaccinations and miracle treatments or cures. Scammers are selling products to treat or prevent COVID-19 without proof that they work.

**Federal Retail Pharmacy Program for COVID-19 Vaccination:** Beginning February 11, those eligible for the vaccine will have the opportunity to be vaccinated at no cost at select pharmacies across the country. This program represents a public-private partnership with 21 national pharmacy partners and networks of independent pharmacies representing over 40,000 pharmacy locations nationwide. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) worked with states to select initial pharmacy partners based on a number of factors including their ability to reach some of the populations most at risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Americans should check their pharmacy’s website to find out if vaccine is available. More information is available here.

**NEW YORK STATE**


- The New York State Department of Financial Services issued a directive on December 16, 2020 requiring all insurers to cover the administration of the COVID-19 vaccines at no cost-sharing by the patient.

- Both the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines are mRNA vaccines. New York State released a video explaining how these vaccines work to safely protect individuals from COVID-19. Three key things to know: They do not affect your own genetic material or DNA; they do not contain the actual COVID-19 virus; and they cannot give the recipient COVID. [Watch the video.](https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/)

• **NYS Hotline focused on vaccine-related fraud.** New Yorkers who suspect fraud in the vaccine distribution process can now call **833-VAX-SCAM (833-829-7226)** toll-free or email the state Department of Health at **STOPVAXFRAUD@health.ny.gov**. Hotline staff will route complaints to the appropriate investigative agencies to ensure New Yorkers are not being taken advantage of as the State works to vaccinate the entire eligible population.

• **New York State is encouraging eligible New Yorkers to train to become vaccinators.** If you are a licensed practical nurse, a dentist, an EMT, a medical or nursing student with at least a year of clinical experience, and more — then you may be eligible to take training to become a vaccinator and help New York administer COVID vaccines over the coming months. See how you can get involved [here](#).

• **New York State’s COVID-19 Vaccination Program:**
  - Vaccine sites are also being added in order to facilitate an increased number of New Yorkers getting vaccinated. For more information and to schedule an appointment if you currently qualify for a vaccine, follow this link: [https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-vaccine-locations.page](https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-vaccine-locations.page)
  - Once New Yorkers become eligible for the vaccine, they can complete an online webform [https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/](https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/) and will then be directed to a list of providers near them to schedule an appointment.
  - **New York State regional vaccination hubs led by local hospital systems to coordinate administration of vaccine with State and local community networks:** [Details Here](#)
  - **The Governor announced the launch of New York's Vaccine Equity Task Force** chaired by Secretary of State Rossana Rosado, Attorney General Letitia James, National Urban League President & CEO Marc Morial, and Healthfirst President & CEO Pat Wang. The Task Force will work to ensure vulnerable and underserved communities are not left behind by breaking
down the barriers to vaccination and ensuring there is equitable distribution of the vaccine across the state. The State will also develop community vaccination kits to set up sites to administer the vaccine. See: Press Release

- More than 2 million individuals are now eligible to be vaccinated as part of Phase 1A. On January 4, 2021, the list of eligible New Yorkers was expanded again to include all doctors, nurses and health care staff who come in contact with the public; ambulatory centers staff; and all public health care workers who provide direct in-person care, including those who conduct COVID-19 tests and handle lab specimens. Beginning this week, eligibility will also be expanded to include home care workers, hospice workers, and nursing home and other congregate setting workers who have yet to receive a vaccine through the federal nursing home vaccination program. See the full list, including previously announced priority groups, [here](#).

- A new state web application launched on January 4, 2021, will help New Yorkers determine if they are eligible to get the vaccine. By answering a series of simple questions, New Yorkers can find out if they are eligible for the vaccine and, if so, where to make an appointment. See if you’re eligible [here](#).

- The Governor announced that to date (January 5, 2020) 3,762 providers have applied and been approved by the state to serve as vaccination sites. Currently, 636 locations are now activated and are able to begin vaccinating eligible New Yorkers. To view press release and regional breakdown of sites click [here](#).

- New York State has opted into the federal government's nursing home vaccination program. Under the federal program, employees of CVS and Walgreens will vaccinate residents and staff at these facilities, much like they do for the flu vaccine. We expect deliveries for this program to begin arriving next week and the federal administration program to begin by December 21st. New York is dedicating a portion of our initial 170,000 doses to this program. Portions of future state allocations will also be used to help complete the program and ensure all residents and staff are vaccinated.
The CDC has agreed to remove requirements on vaccine reporting data that could have been used to identify immigration status. This means that New York will not send any personally identifying information to the federal government in vaccine distribution—ensuring that no one feels dissuaded from getting vaccinated due to immigration status.

**VACCINATION ROLL OUT & UPDATES**

- New Yorkers with qualifying comorbidities and pre-existing conditions. These New Yorkers will be able to make appointments at state-run mass vaccination sites beginning **Sunday, February 14**, with vaccinations beginning **Monday, February 15**. Local health departments will determine how, where and when to schedule appointments in their jurisdictions, and those appointments will begin as early as February 15. New Yorkers will have to provide documentation as required by the facility where they are getting vaccinated—the exact form of documentation will be determined by local governments, but may be either a doctor's letter, medical information evidencing comorbidity, or a certification.

- Starting **Monday, January 11, 2021**, the State has opened vaccination appointments to a larger pool of people who are classified as essential and front-line workers, including
  - First responders (local police, State Police, Sheriff’s Office employees, professional and volunteer firefighters);
  - EMS workers (including professional and volunteer paramedics and EMTs);
  - Education workers (pre-K through 12 teachers and education workers, in-class higher education instructors; licensed and registered childcare providers, and school-bus drivers);
  - Public transit workers (airline and airport employees, passenger railroad employees, subway and mass transit employees, ferry employees, Port Authority employees, and public bus drivers);
  - Public safety workers; and
  - People over the age of 75.
• Group 1A New Yorkers (health care workers, including independent health care workers, home care workers, and hospice workers) can continue to schedule an appointment at participating hospitals and designated community vaccine sites. Please visit https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov and https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-vaccine-locations.page.

• New Yorkers aged 65 and older are now eligible for the Covid-19 vaccine under new federal guidance announced Tuesday, January 12, 2021. Gov. Andrew Cuomo said the state has accepted a Trump administration policy that expands eligibility to individuals aged 65-plus and those who are immunocompromised — adding at least another 1.8 million New Yorkers to the list of eligible vaccine recipients.

• Click Here to Determine Eligibility and Schedule Appointments with Administrating Providers, including community-based locations.

• Eligibility determinations and a list of nearby providers where appointments can be also be scheduled through New York's new 'Am I Eligible " app.

• New Yorkers can begin calling the New York State Vaccination Hotline at 4PM on Monday, January 11: 1-833-NYS-4VAX (1-833-697-4829). The COVID-19 Vaccination Hotline is open 7AM - 10PM, 7 days a week, for scheduling vaccination appointments for eligible New Yorkers.

• Supply of vaccine is very limited and will fluctuate daily, so you may not be able to make an appointment right away.

• Vaccine sites are scheduling appointments no more than a couple of weeks out because there is uncertainty about vaccine supply.

• New York will expand to a larger provider network for vaccine distribution. To assist with Phase 1B vaccine administration and those 65+, the expanded network will include doctor networks, Federally Qualified Health Centers, county health departments, ambulatory centers and pharmacies. Starting the week of January 11, 500 pharmacies will come online to assist in the vaccine distribution. All of these new providers will begin accepting vaccination reservations on Monday. See: Announcement, Sites and Providers
• The state will open 20 mass vaccination sites over the next several weeks, including Javits Center in New York City on January 13, 2021. See: Press Release

• On Friday, February 5, 2021, a mass vaccination site at Yankee Stadium will open through a partnership among New York State, New York City, SOMOS Community Care, the New York National Guard, and the New York Yankees. This site will be reserved specifically for Bronx residents. If you’re a Bronx resident who is eligible for the vaccine, schedule an appointment by visiting Somosvaccinations.com or by calling 1-833-SOMOSNY.

• Thirty-five pop-up vaccination sites are coming online this week at churches, community centers, public housing complexes and cultural centers across the state. These sites are expected to vaccinate over 25,000 people throughout the week, with more sites coming online every week. Since January 15, the deployment of community vaccination kits has enabled nearly 9,000 New Yorkers to receive their first COVID-19 vaccine dose, often in communities where there are very limited health care options. Learn more. (Feb. 2, 2021)

• Governor Cuomo announced on Sunday, January 24 that New York will expand its current deployment of vaccination kits to more communities around the State.
  o Four additional NYCHA sites will receive vaccination kits.
  o Additional churches will receive vaccination kits as well.
  o Work is underway to deploy to all 33 NYCHA senior housing developments in order to provide seniors with easier access to vaccines.
  o This effort will expand into public housing complexes throughout New York and to more than 300 churches. Read more here.

• As of January 19, 2021, five new State-run vaccination sites opened across New York State. Vaccination sites at SUNY Stony Brook, the Aqueduct Racetrack in Queens, SUNY Potsdam, SUNY Buffalo and Plattsburgh International Airport are open and vaccinating eligible New Yorkers against the COVID-19 virus. Vaccinations are by appointment only.
• New York State and New York-Presbyterian Hospital launched a new vaccination site for eligible New Yorkers in Washington Heights on January 14, 2021. This new site, at Fort Washington Armory in Upper Manhattan, was made possible thanks to a partnership with Weill Cornell Medicine and Columbia University Irving Medical Center. The site is offering vaccinations to New Yorkers age 65 and up and appointments can be scheduled online through the NewYork-Presbyterian Connect Online Patient Portal. Appointments are required.

• Gov. Cuomo signed an executive order to expand the types of professions of who can administer a vaccine to include licensed practical nurses, pharmacists and their technicians, midwives, dentists, dental hygienists, podiatrists, EMTs, and eligible students. All eligible New Yorkers wishing to become vaccinators must undergo training. Learn more here.

• New York is mandating social equity and fair distribution among the groups included in 1B to ensure fair treatment and proportionate allocations both by group and by region. The state will open distribution sites in underserved areas to ensure social equity.

• The Office of the New York State Attorney General Letitia James issued an alert about potential scams offering early access to the vaccine at a cost and to acquire personal information. Beware of anyone who calls, e-mails, or texts you offering early access to a COVID-19 vaccine. Some scammers are also using online platforms. Scammers may impersonate public health authorities from organizations such as the Center for Disease Control (CDC) or the World Health Organization (WHO). They may also offer to ship a COVID-19 vaccine directly to homes, provide special access to vaccines or clinical trial treatments, or sell special cold storage devices for vaccines. If you believe that you have been the victim of unlawful activity, please report these incidents to the Attorney General’s office.
NEW YORK CITY

- New York City DOHMH has created a Vaccine web page to keep New Yorkers up to date. You can access it here: https://www1.nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-vaccines.page
  - Mayor de Blasio and the Taskforce on Racial Inclusion & Equity outlined the City’s Vaccine Equity Plan and launched the vaccine command center on Friday, Dec. 11. Through targeted outreach and a network of trusted community messengers, the City will ensure equitable vaccine distribution to the 27 hardest-hit neighborhoods identified by the Task Force. The City will also open a dedicated Vaccine Command Center, led by Deputy Mayor Hartzog and Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Commissioner Dave Chokshi, to coordinate vaccine distribution across the City. The center will track critical metrics on vaccine coverage, with a priority focus on the 27 neighborhoods.
  - The City will use NYCHA space—including NYC Health + Hospitals clinics—to vaccinate priority populations, following the successful partnership model the City established with NYCHA for COVID-19 testing. Through a broader outreach effort, the City will work with NYCHA residents, community partners, and faith leaders to distribute accurate and trustworthy information about the vaccine and improve the distribution process.

- Mayor de Blasio announced on December 31, 2020, an ambitious goal for the city to administer 1 million COVID-19 vaccine doses by the end of January 2021.
  - Using the Vaccine Command Center in coordination with health and administering facilities, the mayor plans to double New York City's weekly vaccination, with a goal of 400,000 doses per week by the end of the month.
    o The mayor also hopes to begin vaccinating educators, schools staff, first responders (cops, firefighters, etc..) soon. Read more here.
    o To increased vaccine capacity, pop-up sites and vaccine hubs will be
assembled with partnering organizations.

- There will be two new **vaccine pop-up clinics**, five new **NYC Health + Hospitals vaccination sites** and three new **NYC Vaccine Hubs**.

- The first three openings for Sunday, January 10, 2021 are:
  - Brooklyn - **Bushwick Educational Campus** at 400 Irving Avenue
  - Queens - **Hillcrest High School** at 160-05 Highland Avenue
  - Bronx - **South Bronx Educational Campus** at 701 St. Ann's Avenue

- The goal is to have:
  - **250 sites** by the end of January,
  - people working **7-days** a week,
  - questions or need information click [here](#).

**NYC SPECIFIC INFORMATION: ROLL OUT OF VACCINATIONS**

- **As of February 2**, in addition to group 1A and those previously eligible as part of group 1B, taxi and limousine drivers (TLC licensees, including ride-hailing app drivers) and restaurant workers are also eligible. [Learn more about who is currently eligible for vaccination.](#)
  - Restaurant workers (including app-based delivery workers);
  - Taxi and for-hire vehicle drivers; and
  - Developmental disability facility residents and staff.

See the [full eligibility list](#) and how to [make an appointment](#)

- Seniors age 65 or older who are unable to make their own arrangements and need transportation to and from a COVID-19 vaccination appointment can sign up for transportation through the City, Mayor de Blasio announced on January 17, 2021. Older New Yorkers age 65 and over who make an appointment for vaccine at a City-operated site will be asked whether they have a way to get to and from their appointment. If they require transportation, they will be screened and directed to transportation options,
including Access-a-Ride, ambulette services, cab service via Curb and in a few weeks, transportation by select Senior Center programs. See: Press Release

- **COVID-19 Vaccine Finder (NEW):** If you are eligible to receive a vaccination, use the Vaccine Finder to search for a location near you.
- **COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility:** Learn which groups are currently eligible for the vaccine.

The NYC Health Department vaccine reservation website has been launched on January 11 at: [https://vaccinefinder.nyc.gov/](https://vaccinefinder.nyc.gov/). Once you access the website, you will be prompted to enter your address or zip code, and you will be able to see all open vaccine sites within the existing health care infrastructure (Federally Qualified Health Centers, Urgent Care Centers, pharmacies, doctors’ offices) in New York City. For each vaccine site, a phone number or website link is provided to schedule an appointment.

- **New Yorkers may also call the City Hotline to make a vaccine reservation:** 877-VAX-4NYC. Hotline hours are currently 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m.

- Supply of vaccine is very limited and will fluctuate daily, so you may not be able to make an appointment right away.

- Vaccine sites are scheduling appointments no more than a couple of weeks out because there is uncertainty about vaccine supply.

- In addition to the NYS and NYC vaccine reservation websites, New Yorkers can also schedule an appointment at a Mount Sinai Hospital facility by visiting Mount Sinai’s reservation directly at: [https://www.mountsinai.org/about/covid19/vaccine-information/schedule](https://www.mountsinai.org/about/covid19/vaccine-information/schedule).

- Beginning Monday, January 11, 2021, vaccine sites will open in partnership with SOMOS and FDNY for frontline City workers who qualify for Phase 1B. For eligible individuals under Phase 1A, the first of two 24/7 mass vaccination sites opened this Sunday in the Bronx and Brooklyn, and well as three
Vaccination Hubs.

- **SOMOS**
  - Bronx: X410 Taft High School
  - Brooklyn: George Wingate High School
  - Manhattan: Brandeis High School

- **FDNY**
  - Queens: John Adams High School
  - Staten Island: Susan Wagner High School

- **Other Vaccine Hubs open:**
  - **Brooklyn**
    - Bushwick Educational Campus
    - 400 Irving Avenue
  - **Queens**
    - Hillcrest High School
    - 160-05 Highland Avenue
  - **Bronx**
    - South Bronx Educational Campus
    - 701 St. Ann’s Avenue

- **Additional Vaccination Hubs**
  - The City will open 12 additional vaccine hubs beginning Friday, January 15th.
  - The hubs will be open from 9:00 AM – 7:00 PM, seven days a week.

- **Brooklyn**
  - Abraham Lincoln High School
  - 2800 Ocean Parkway
IMPORTANT STEPS TO GETTING A VACCINATION

- Follow these steps to obtain a COVID-19 vaccination in any facility in New York State or City:

  1. Schedule an appointment by phone or online (keep trying if you do not get through or cannot get an appointment right away)

1-833-NYS-4VAX (1-833-697-4829) or for NYC 1-877-VAX-4NYC

2. Complete the NYS COVID-19 Vaccine Form before getting the vaccine. The
State requires the provider administering the vaccine to check completion of the form.

- Complete the form online: https://forms.ny.gov/s3/vaccine,

OR


3. You must wear a face covering and social distance while at the vaccine site.
4. If you do not feel well on the day of your appointment, please stay home and reschedule your appointment.
5. Bring proof of eligibility. **Eligible essential workers will need to bring proof of employment, such as an employee ID card, a letter from an employer or affiliated organization, or a recent pay stub.**

If you have concerns about the FDA-approved COVID-19 vaccines, please take a look at the following fact sheet developed by the NYC Health Department: https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/covid/covid-19-vaccines-faq.pdf.

**OTHER RESOURCES**


The information, which is not intended to be exhaustive, is culled from multiple publicly available sources for awareness purposes.