

Background/Talking Points: COVID-19 Vaccinations

In an effort to provide a shared, common understanding of the COVID-19 vaccination situation as we know it on December 18, 2020, the Montgomery County Board of Developmental Disabilities Services (MCBDDS) has assembled background information to assist staff, individuals, families and providers.

MCBDDS has met with Public Health-Dayton & Montgomery County to acquaint them with the extent of the health and safety needs of the DD population locally. Our leaders have provided them with the number of people who receive services from our agency, and have also collected and shared information about the number of agency, independent provider and ICF staff delivering direct care to individuals in Montgomery County. Public Health understands that people with developmental disabilities represent an especially vulnerable population, and have committed to including people with DD and those that serve them in the first round of people to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Because MCBDDS is not a healthcare agency, its staff should not attempt to answer questions about the vaccine, its safety or efficacy, or speculate about any aspect of its delivery outside of what is shared in this document. If you receive questions outside of those included here, please forward them to Dr. Pamela Combs, Superintendent, or Janice Saddler Rice, MCBDDS's Director of Communications.

Additional information about the vaccination process will be shared as it becomes available.

Eligibility

Q: Who will be the first people allowed to get the vaccine?

A: During the first phase, when supplies of the vaccine are limited, the vaccine will be administered in three phases:

- Phase 1A: Healthcare personnel, long-term care facility residents and individuals with developmental disabilities who live in congregate settings (which is defined as two or more people with DD living together in the same place).
- Phase 1B: Essential workers (e.g., police, firefighters, corrections officers, transportation personnel, utility workers, food and agriculture workers, people who work in the education sector)
- Phase 1C: Adults with high-risk medical conditions, including people with developmental disabilities; adults 65 and older

Q: What do you mean by “congregate setting”? Does that mean a licensed setting?

A: The term “congregate setting” for these purposes is defined as two or more people with DD living in the same place. That does not have to be in a licensed facility; it could be two children with developmental disabilities from the same family, living at home with their parents.

Q: If a parent is my caregiver, do they qualify for the first round of the vaccine?

A: It does not appear that parents would qualify for Phase 1A unless they have two or more children with developmental disabilities living in their home.

Q: Do independent providers qualify for the first round of the vaccine?

A: It does not appear that they would qualify for the first round of the vaccine unless they are serving two or more people with DD living in the same place.

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Q: Do I have to get the vaccine if I am an individual?

A: No, you do not, though public health officials are encouraging people to do so.

Q: Do Direct Support Professionals have to get the vaccine?

A: No, they do not, though public health officials are encouraging them to do so.

Q: Will people with developmental disabilities who are not living in congregate settings be able to get the vaccine?

A: It depends on their medical condition, but most people with developmental disabilities would likely qualify to receive it in Phase 1c, which includes adults with high-risk medical conditions.

Q: Can teenagers and children get the vaccine?

A: The pharmacist with Ziks Family Pharmacy, which is one of several pharmacies locally authorized to administer the vaccine, vaccine manufacturers will not offer vaccines to people under the age of 18.

Timing

Q: When will the vaccines be delivered?

A: Public Health-Dayton & Montgomery County does not yet have an exact delivery date, but our understanding is that they hope to begin administering vaccines in January and February to people eligible per Phase I guidelines.

Q: When will people who don't qualify for the first round of the vaccine be able to get it?

A: Our understanding is that Phase 2, which is expected to begin in mid-February and continue through April, will see people with two or more comorbidities (meaning at high risk for COVID-19 complications); education, transit, grocery, food and agriculture, sanitation, public works and public health workers; adults 65 and over; and individuals with one comorbidity will be eligible.

Phase 3, which is expected to start in late April, is when the vaccine is expected to become available to the general public.

Q: What if I qualify for the vaccine but don't want to get it right away? Can I opt out? And if so, when can I get it again?

A: While you do not have to take the vaccine, early supplies are limited. Changing your mind after declining the initial vaccine offering could lead to delays for you.

The Vaccine

Q: Are there different types of COVID-19 vaccine?

A: Several different manufacturers have created COVID-19 vaccines.

Q: How can we learn more about the different versions of the COVID-19 vaccines?

A: Detailed information about Ohio's COVID-19 vaccination program can be found at the [Ohio Department of Health website](#), and we encourage you to read it. You can also consult the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Public Health-Dayton & Montgomery County websites for more information about the vaccines.

Q: Who will be administering the vaccines?

A: Because vaccine doses must be kept in very specific conditions to ensure their efficacy and safety, and because the government is tracking administration carefully, only organizations and people that meet specific qualifications will be able to administer the vaccine. Such organizations include pharmacies and Public Health organizations.

Q: How will the vaccines be administered?

A: MCBDDS is working with Public Health-Dayton & Montgomery County to develop a plan for the administration of these vaccines. Some vaccines will be administered at qualified pharmacy locations. In the case of people with developmental disabilities who cannot leave their facilities, pharmacies and Public Health officials could come to them and administer the vaccines onsite.

Q: Will provider or county board nurses be able to administer the vaccine?

A: No.

Q: Do we know which manufacturer's vaccine will be administered?

A: No.

Q: Do we know if there are any side effects from these vaccines?

A: Detailed information about Ohio's COVID-19 vaccination program can be found at the [Ohio Department of Health website](#), and we encourage you to read it. You can also consult the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Public Health-Dayton & Montgomery County websites for more information about the vaccines.

Q: When vaccines are administered, will the administering personnel be watching for allergic reactions?

A: It is our understanding that all individuals seeking the vaccine will be asked a series of screening questions to determine their likelihood of allergic reaction. If these questions do not offer a reason to believe an adverse reaction is likely to occur, they will be observed for a brief period onsite afterward.

Q: Are there any risks to taking the vaccine?

A: Detailed information about Ohio's COVID-19 vaccination program can be found at the [Ohio Department of Health website](#), and we encourage you to read it. You can also consult the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Public Health-Dayton & Montgomery County websites for more information about the vaccines.

Q: How effective are the vaccines?

A: This information is available at the [Ohio Department of Health website](#), and we encourage you to read it. You can also consult the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Public Health-Dayton & Montgomery County websites for more information about the vaccines.

Q: How much will the vaccine cost people who receive it?

A: If you have healthcare coverage, your insurer will be billed for the cost of the vaccine and its administration. Programs will also be available to provide vaccinations for people without health insurance.

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Requirements

Q: Will I have to sign a waiver form to take the vaccine?

A: It is our understanding that vaccine manufacturers will have people sign a waiver before allowing vaccines to be administered. We also believe that a waiver may be forthcoming from the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities.

Post-Vaccine

Q: Do I have to stay away from other people once I get the vaccine?

A: Individuals who receive the vaccine should not be infectious as a result of taking it, as the vaccines being administered in the U.S. do not use the live virus that causes COVID-19. However, health officials state that mask wearing will still be needed post-vaccine.

Q: Do I need to wear a mask once I get the vaccine?

A: Health officials indicate that mask wearing will still be needed.

Q: How long will it take for the vaccine to take effect?

A: The personnel at Ziks Pharmacy have told us that the vaccine will be delivered in two doses, _____ weeks apart.

Q: How long is the vaccine good for?

A: Detailed information about Ohio's COVID-19 vaccination program can be found at the [Ohio Department of Health website](#), and we encourage you to read it. You can also consult the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Public Health-Dayton & Montgomery County websites for more information about the vaccines.

For Additional Information

Visit the Ohio Department of Health COVID-19 Vaccination Program information page at <https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/covid-19-vaccination-program>.

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