

## COVID-19 Vaccines Information for Partners

CMS released a set of a set of toolkits for providers, states and insurers to help the health care system prepare to swiftly administer the vaccine once it is available. These resources are designed to increase the number of providers that can administer the vaccine, ensure adequate reimbursement for administering the vaccine in Medicare, while making it clear to private insurers and Medicaid programs their responsibility to cover the vaccine at no charge to beneficiaries. In addition, CMS is taking action to increase reimbursement for any new COVID treatments that are approved by the FDA.

### **Focus of this toolkit**

Because you help Medicare beneficiaries and other consumers, we are providing you with information to help you in your interactions with them.

### **Will the vaccine be covered?**

People with the following types of coverage will be eligible to get the COVID-19 vaccine: Original Medicare, a Medicare Advantage Plan, a Medicare health plan, Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Basic Health Program (BHP), and private health plans. People who only have coverage through limited benefit packages for Medicaid may not be covered.

### **What's the cost?**

The COVID-19 vaccine will be available to everyone for free, regardless of coverage status. They won't pay coinsurance, deductibles, or copayments. The vaccine will be federally purchased - funding through the CARES Act will pay for the vaccine.

### **What's the status of the vaccine?**

While several vaccine candidates are in development, a COVID-19 vaccine isn't currently available. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) may approve a COVID-19 vaccine under an Emergency Use Authorization or licensure before it is made available to the public. Vaccine coverage won't depend on the type of FDA authorization.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) gets input from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, a group of medical and public health experts who develop recommendations on the use of vaccines in the United States, and will develop guidelines on which groups of people they will initially recommend to get the vaccine first.

When COVID-19 vaccines become available, use the CDC guidelines to understand this priority ranking and direct the people you serve their insurer or health care provider. For example, those with a Medicare Advantage Plan or Medicare health plan can contact their plan and those with Medicaid can contact their state Medicaid agency.

### **What can you do now?**

Although the COVID-19 vaccine isn't yet available, there are still steps you can take now by encouraging your communities to:

- Learn about the importance of vaccines. There have been significant decreases in routine immunizations during the public health emergency. Visit [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to learn more.

- Get caught up on all of their recommended vaccines including their flu vaccine, if they haven't already.
- Follow CDC guidelines, including washing their hands often, keeping a social distance, and wearing a mask or face covering.
- Visit [cms.gov/covidvax](https://cms.gov/covidvax) to find information about COVID-19 vaccine coverage and reimbursement for providers, health plans and issuers, and states.

### **What can you do when the vaccine is available?**

When the vaccine is available, take these steps:

- Continue to encourage patients and communities to get all recommended immunizations, including the COVID-19 vaccine. They should get the vaccine to protect them from getting COVID-19 and keep them from spreading it to others.
- Provide information about where people can get the vaccine and more information about it. Direct them to <https://vaccinefinder.org/find-vaccine>.
- More than one COVID-19 vaccine may be available and some vaccines may require a second dose. If an additional dose is required, it's important to let the people you serve know they should get it within the timelines suggested.

### **What's next?**

Once a COVID-19 vaccine is available to the general public, CMS will start direct outreach to Medicare beneficiaries and other populations CMS serves to encourage vaccination and promote other key messages. We will rely on you to help reach beneficiaries, consumers and other populations CMS serves to communicate important messages about the COVID-19 vaccine. We will update [cms.gov/covidvax](https://cms.gov/covidvax) with more information as it becomes available.