

VDH COVID-19 Vaccine Phase 1a In Depth

While the supply is limited, COVID-19 vaccine will be provided to specific groups of people over a number of phases. Virginia guidance was adapted from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) recommendations](#) that aim to (1) decrease COVID-19 deaths and serious disease, (2) preserve functioning of society, and (3) reduce the extra burden COVID-19 is having on people already facing disparities.

Virginia's Phase 1a: Vaccinate Healthcare Personnel and Residents of Long Term Care Facilities

Definition of Healthcare Personnel (HCP)


See pages 7-9 of [Guidance on the Essential Critical Infrastructure Workforce: Ensuring Community and National Resilience in COVID-19 Response](#). HCP include:

- Behavioral health providers
- Community health workers
- Dental assistants, hygienists, dentists
- EMT/first responders serving as EMT extenders
- Environmental services staff
- Healthcare trainees
- Home health workers
- Human service providers
- Infection control and quality assurance personnel
- Laboratorians
- Mortuary service providers (e.g. morticians/funeral home staff)
- Nurses, nursing assistants
- Optometrists
- Personal care aides
- Pharmacists, pharmacy techs and staff
- Physicians, physician assistants
- Public-facing public health workers
- Radiological techs (and other diagnostic/therapeutic techs)
- Respiratory, physical, speech and occupational techs
- Social workers

HCP by Order of Risk

To the extent possible, vaccination opportunities should first be aimed at those at greater risk before those at less risk. However, opportunities to vaccinate other HCP efficiently and quickly should not be missed.

1. Those who directly engage in the care of or interact with patients known or suspected of COVID-19, or who have direct exposure to potentially infectious materials from patients known or suspected to be infected with COVID-19.
2. Healthcare personnel who interact with patients at higher risk for infection due to the patients' individual risk factors but are not known or suspected to be infected with COVID-19 (dialysis, residential care facilities and EMS.)
3. Employees and contracted personnel not otherwise vaccinated per the above categories whose duties may require access to clinical settings at health system facilities or who are critical to the ongoing operations of health system facilities.
4. Healthcare personnel who interact with patients not known or suspected to be infected with COVID-19.



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How HCP Can Access Vaccination

Healthcare systems and local health departments are working collaboratively to vaccinate healthcare personnel.

- The ability to schedule appointments will depend on the supply of vaccine available.

HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS are vaccinating their staff. Many are vaccinating non-health system staff as well.

LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS are compiling lists of healthcare providers who are not affiliated with a hospital or health system and are reaching out to those groups as quickly as possible.

INFORMATION FOR HEALTHCARE EMPLOYERS

- Determine which of your employees are at high risk for exposure to COVID-19.
- If you haven't yet been contacted by a health system or local health department, contact your local health department. If unable to get in contact with the local health department, contact the VDH COVID-19 Call Center at 877-ASK-VDH3 (877-275-8343) for assistance.

Residents and Staff within Long Term Care settings

Definition of Long-Term Care Facilities by Order of Risk

1. Skilled nursing facilities
2. In-patient hospice facilities
3. Assisted living facilities
4. Residential care communities; e.g., programs of all-inclusive care for the elderly, psychiatric residential treatment facilities, religious nonmedical health care institutions, etc.}
5. Intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities
6. State veterans homes
7. Other adult care homes, family care homes, group homes

Long-Term Care staff include:

- All staffing working in facilities listed above
- Home health workers (e.g., nursing, respiratory therapists, health aides) who enter the need to go into the homes of individuals with chronic, complex conditions and/or disabilities to deliver nursing and/or daily living care
- Home health providers who deliver health care services for older adults, people with disabilities, and others with chronic health conditions who live independently in the community with supports and services

How LTCF Staff and Residents Can Access Vaccination

In Virginia, most LTCF residents and staff will be vaccinated by CVS and Walgreens teams through the Federal LTCF Pharmacy Partnership program. A small number of facilities that were not included in the program will work with their local health districts to ensure vaccination of their staff and residents.