



COVID-19 VACCINATIONS

FOR BROKERAGE CUSTOMERS,
FAMILIES, AND PAID
PROVIDERS

OREGON
SUPPORT
SERVICES
ASSOCIATION



People with Developmental Disabilities and their Families and Support Workers (PSWs and DSPs) can get the COVID-19 Vaccine now

COVID vaccines have been tested and proven effective and are arriving now in Oregon.

We all have questions about how vaccines will get to all the people who need them. We gathered some information to share about the unfolding COVID-19 Vaccination Process.

Our goal is to provide people with the most accurate information so that they can be healthy, safe and informed about the process.



People with Developmental Disabilities and their Families and Support Workers (PSWs and DSPs) can get the COVID-19 Vaccine now

The COVID-19 Vaccines are here and Oregon gets more doses each day.

Oregon has a plan that says who can get the COVID-19 Vaccine. The plan puts people first who are at greatest risk of:

- Getting COVID-19, or
- Getting really sick with COVID-19.



People with Developmental Disabilities and their Families and Support Workers (PSWs and DSPs) can get the COVID-19 Vaccine now

There are 3 Phases to the roll-out plan and different groups within each Phase.

Adults and youth (age 16+) with developmental disabilities, their families and support workers are in Phase 1a.

Oregon is currently giving vaccines to all people who are in Phase 1a.



People with Developmental Disabilities and their Families and Support Workers (PSWs and DSPs) can get the COVID-19 Vaccine now

Brokerage customers, people who provide unpaid support in direct contact with them, and paid providers should be able to get the vaccine as part of Phase 1a-Group 3.

Initially, these groups were going to be offered the vaccine in chronological group order. In an effort to get people protected by the vaccine as quickly as possible, the Governor and the Oregon Health Authority have opened the vaccine eligibility to all groups within Phase 1a at the same time.



Why Would I Want to Get the Vaccine?

1. A vaccine is important to help stop the spread of COVID-19: Vaccines help your body grow its ability to fight off a specific disease, which keeps you healthy, protects our hospitals from overcrowding, and stops COVID spreading through the community.



Why Would I Want to Get the Vaccine?

2. It is a safe way to protect yourself from getting COVID-19: The vaccine development process is rigorous, with many trials, tests, and benchmarks that must be met. The vaccine has been tested on many thousands of volunteers from diverse backgrounds. Vaccines have a proven track record of fighting and even getting rid of disease.



Why Would I Want to Get the Vaccine?

3. It will protect others around you: As fewer people contract the disease, it gets harder for the disease to spread within a community. As a society, we need people to be vaccinated in order to get rid of COVID.



Why Would I Want to Get the Vaccine?

4. The vaccine will help us get back to "normal" faster: There is no cure for COVID for people who catch the disease. Vaccination is our best chance of reducing COVID infections to the point that the danger is low enough for people to return to normal life routines and activities.



Where and When Can I Get the Vaccine?

Information on vaccine availability will be released by Local Public Health Authorities. This means that vaccine locations and procedures may vary somewhat from place to place across the state. As the vaccine is distributed and made available in your area, information will likely be shared on local media. Specific information will also come to you through contact from your Personal Agent.

We do not yet know what the processes will be, but you may be asked to make an appointment, or there may be more public vaccination events in your community.

When we know where you can receive a vaccine, we will call and tell you!



Who is Eligible for the Vaccine Now?

Phase 1a-Group 3 includes most people who use and interact with the DD service system.

All people with an intellectual or developmental disability are now able to get the vaccine.



Who is Eligible for the Vaccine Now?

The following people are eligible to get a vaccine now under Phase Ia-Group 3:

- People enrolled in a Brokerage, Group Homes, Foster Care, or other service
- People who have IDD but do not receive services
- People who live with and/or provide care in close contact to a person who has an intellectual or developmental disability
- PSWs and DSPs



How Much Vaccine is Available Right Now?

Oregon does have a limited supply at the time of the drafting of this document, early in January 2021. This is why Oregon has created a roll-out plan. More vaccine doses are arriving regularly.



Do I Have a Choice About Getting the Vaccine?

Yes, most people will be able to choose whether or not they get the vaccine. Not everyone will choose to be vaccinated. Doctors may advise a very small number of people not to get the vaccine during the initial roll-out.

Note that it is legal for employers to require that their employees have this vaccination, and they can ask for proof of vaccination. Proof of vaccination may also be a requirement to travel to certain countries.



How Do I Know if the Vaccine is Right for Me?

Your best source of personalized medical advice is your doctor. The vaccine is generally recommended as our best opportunity to avoid COVID-19 infection. Though the vaccine development process included a wide variety of individuals and populations, there are a few small subsets of people who were not included as part of vaccine trials.

Because there is not yet testing data to support vaccination for those specific sub-groups, they may not be encouraged to be vaccinated initially. If you have concerns, your doctor will be able to help you decide what is best for you.



How Do I Know if the Vaccine is Right for Me?

For more general information, Oregon has provided many online resources to assist you in your research, including:

COVID-19 Vaccine in Oregon

COVID-19 Updates

Office of Developmental Disabilities Services



How Do I Get the Vaccine?

Information is coming out continuously about vaccine distribution. As of this publication, we know that local public health entities will determine how the vaccine is administered in each community around Oregon.

This means that the answer to this question in Clackamas County may be different than it is in Coos County.



What If I Need Help Getting Vaccinated?

Your Brokerage Personal Agent is here to help you navigate this process. We will contact you as information becomes available about where and when vaccines are available.

Your Personal Agent is not able to administer the vaccine, nor do Brokerages have medically-trained personnel on staff.

If you need support to get to a vaccination site, we will help as needed, which may look like: helping to schedule an appointment with you, helping to coordinate provider support, arranging transportation, etc.

We cannot give you the shot, but we can help you get to someone who can.



What proof will I need to provide that I am part of Group 1a?

Based on most recent communication, you (or a supporter) will need to be able to state that you are in “Phase 1a-Group 3” and what category you fall into:

- Person with an IDD diagnosis
- Person providing support to an individual with an IDD diagnosis
- Parent helping care for a child with an IDD diagnosis



What if OHA moves on to the next phase and I miss my group?

People eligible during 1a can request a vaccine at any point in the process. You will not lose your spot in line. As OHA moves down the vaccine priority list, they open the opportunity up to more people without closing it to others.



What do I need to bring to my vaccine appointment?

You should be given specific information about this when you make your vaccine appointment. You will most likely need to be prepared to talk with your vaccination provider about:

- What makes you eligible for vaccination (diagnosis of developmental disability, status as a person providing support, etc.)
- Your medical conditions
- All known allergies
- Any previous experience with vaccine side effects
- Your address/where you live



What should I expect after my vaccine?

As is common with most vaccines, you may experience pain or discomfort after the shot as part of your body's immune response.

Side effects that have been reported with the COVID-19 vaccines include injection site pain, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain, fever, injection site swelling, injection site redness, nausea, feeling unwell, and swollen lymph nodes.

The purpose of any vaccine is to stimulate an immune response from your body so that it can fight off infection threats as they occur. This immune response may cause some aches and pains, but it is all in the service of making sure that you are protected from the worst effects of COVID-19.



What should I expect after my vaccine?

The vaccination process should include an observation period of around 15-20 minutes after administration to ensure there are no actual side effects, such as an allergic reaction.

Such reactions are rare, but have occurred in a small handful of instances. If you know of any allergies that you have (or allergies that a family member getting the vaccine has), please make sure that you discuss those with your provider.



What should I expect after my vaccine?

This vaccine requires 2 doses, about 3 weeks apart. You should be prepared to schedule a return visit.

Please note that, while honoring this vaccination schedule gives you the best chance to develop the immunity you need, it is possible to get your second “booster” shot later than indicated and still experience the benefit.

Make a plan to get your second shot as prescribed, but do not give it up entirely if something gets in the way of that plan.



Will the vaccine give me COVID?

No, neither COVID vaccine will infect you with COVID.

The two COVID vaccines approved to date work by directing your body to create a protein that looks enough like the COVID virus that your body is tricked, and develops antibodies to fight it.

That builds your body's ability to fight off the true COVID virus when you later encounter it, keeping you from developing an infection and getting sick.



How can I continue to keep myself and others safe after I get the vaccine?

We will all be asked to continue to take safety precautions after vaccination. Keep in mind that it will take a little while after you receive the shot for your body to grow its ability to fight off the COVID virus.

The real measure of whether or not the vaccine is working is whether the disease is still moving from person to person in our communities.

Until the COVID infections rates, hospital capacity, and other indicators of community transmission go down, we will need to keep our masks on, keep our distance, and avoid indoor gatherings.



Please note that information is changing quickly and we're doing all we can to share details as we receive it from Local Public Health Authorities.

Thanks to our partners at Disability Rights Oregon and the Oregon Council on Developmental Disabilities for their partnership.

