



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**February 12, 2021**

## **Department of Health Issues COVID-19 Vaccine Order to Help Expedite Vaccine Administration, Improve Accessibility for Seniors**

**Harrisburg, PA** - Acting Secretary of Health Alison Beam today issued an [order](#) directing vaccine providers' administration of COVID-19 vaccines to ensure that Pennsylvanians are vaccinated as quickly and efficiently as possible. Governor Tom Wolf signed a concurrent [order](#).

"I understand how frustrating the current vaccine process can seem and we have heard from many Pennsylvanians that are struggling to schedule an appointment," Acting Secretary Beam said. "As there is very limited COVID-19 vaccine supply compared to demand, every possible effort must be made so that the vaccine received in the commonwealth is effectively administered. To achieve this goal, I am issuing an order outlining appropriate steps and recognized best practices to ensure vaccine providers are effectively meeting the goal of vaccinating Pennsylvanians and creating a healthy Pennsylvania for all."

The updated requirements for vaccine providers include:

- At a minimum, vaccine providers must administer 80 percent of their first doses of vaccine received within seven days of receipt of those doses.
- Vaccine providers must follow all requirements and recommendations in the [COVID-19 Interim Vaccination Plan](#).
- Vaccine providers must adhere to the current phase of Pennsylvania's vaccine rollout, as defined by the [department](#).
- Vaccine providers giving a two-dose vaccine shall provide the COVID-19 vaccine reminder card with a date for a return appointment for the second dose of vaccine.
- Vaccine providers giving a two-dose vaccine must make every appropriate effort to ensure available appointments for second doses, including, but not limited to, designating appointment times for second doses or scheduling second doses at the time of first dose administration, or both.
- Vaccine providers must have both an online and a phone-based registration system for direct appointment scheduling. Information on these systems must be made available to the department so it can be posted online.
- Vaccine providers must report the following:

- Vaccinations and the information required by the [\*Order Requiring Reporting of Data Related to Each Administration of an Immunization for COVID-19\*](#), dated December 15, 2020, on each vaccine administered, including race and ethnicity of the recipient, whether or not the recipient is connected to the vaccine provider.
- Within 24 hours of receipt of inventory or administration of a vaccine, vaccine providers shall report:
  - Receipt of shipments of COVID-19 immunization inventory;
  - Reduction in inventory levels as vaccines are administered; and
  - Reconciliation of inventory levels.

Vaccine providers may have their allocation of first doses reduced, or temporarily suspended, for failure to comply with guidance from the federal government and state law, including failure to comply with the Order. Allocations of first doses reduced or temporarily suspended may be restored once a vaccine provider provides assurance of future compliance of the Order to the department.

If a vaccine provider doesn't administer 80 percent of its first doses within seven days of receiving those doses, the provider will still be able to receive second doses, as second doses are secure. The department may grant a vaccine provider additional time to meet the 80 percent administration metric if the vaccine provider informs the department of inclement weather or infrastructure failures outside of the provider's control, which impacted the vaccine administration.

The Order requires that every provider have a phone number for direct appointment scheduling. We know that not every individual has access to the Internet, and others may find it challenging to go online to find providers in their area or navigate online appointment portals.

We also know that vaccine demographic reporting has thus far been incomplete. The Order makes clear that providers must follow the racial and ethnic data reporting requirements.

This Order is effective at 12:01 a.m. on February 12, 2021 and shall take effect as follows:

- The online and phone-based registration system requirements shall take effect 12:01 a.m. on February 19, 2021;
- The allocation enforcement shall take effect 12:01 a.m. on February 22, 2021; and
- The remainder of this Order shall take effect immediately.

This Order rescinds and replaces the [Order of the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Health Requiring Health Systems, Hospitals, Federally Qualified Health Centers and Pharmacies to Vaccinate Certain Health Care Personnel](#), dated December 30, 2020.

The department may reduce or temporarily suspend a Vaccine provider's allocation of first doses for failure to comply with guidance from the federal government and state law, including failure to comply with this Order. It is important to note the Order is not intended to stop second doses from being allocated to providers at the prescribed interval.

Allocations of first doses reduced, or temporarily suspended, under this Order may be restored once a vaccine provider provides assurance of future compliance of this Order to the department.

The only exclusions to the Order are vaccine providers whose provider agreement is with the Philadelphia Department of Public Health and facilities owned or operated by the federal government, including facilities operated by the federal Department of Veterans Affairs.

Frequently asked questions on the Order can be found [here](#).

**While vaccine supply from the federal government remains very limited, the Department of Health is working to ensure the vaccine is provided in a way that is ethical, equitable and efficient.**

- The [Your Turn](#) tool provides a way to register to be alerted when it's your turn to be vaccinated.
- A [commonwealth COVID-19 vaccination guide](#) explains the current process for getting one. Pennsylvanians with questions about the vaccination process can call the Department of Health hotline at 1-877-724-3258.
- [Vaccine provider map](#) to find a COVID-19 vaccine provider near you.
- All of the locations that received vaccine and how much they have received can be found on the [COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution webpage](#).
- [Vaccine dashboard data](#) can also be found on the website to find more information on the doses administered and showcase demographic information.
- Pennsylvanians can provide feedback on the [Pennsylvania COVID-19 Interim Vaccination Plan](#) by clicking on the Plan Feedback Form square under Popular Vaccine Topics [here](#).
- Frequently asked questions can be found [here](#).

**The Wolf Administration stresses the role Pennsylvanians play in helping to reduce the spread of COVID-19:**

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Cover any coughs or sneezes with your elbow, not your hands.
- Clean surfaces frequently.
- Stay home to avoid spreading COVID-19, especially if you are unwell.
- If you must go out, you are required to wear a mask when in a business or where it is difficult to maintain proper social distancing.
- Download the COVID Alert PA app and make your phone part of the fight. The free app can be found in the [Google Play Store](#) and the [Apple App Store](#) by searching for "covid alert pa".

**Updated Coronavirus Links: Press Releases, State Lab Photos, Graphics**

- [Daily COVID-19 Report](#)
- [Press releases regarding coronavirus](#)
- [Latest information on the coronavirus](#)
- [Photos of the state's lab in Exton](#) (for download and use)
- [Coronavirus and preparedness graphics](#) (located at the bottom of the page)

- [Community preparedness and procedures materials](#)

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