

# Office of Developmental Disabilities Services

## COVID-19 Vaccine and I/DD Services

The COVID-19 vaccine will soon be available. The vaccine is an important tool to end the pandemic. If enough people get vaccinated, then COVID-19 will stop spreading from person to person. The two COVID-19 vaccines currently approved, Pfizer and Moderna, are 95 percent effective and have been tested.

Take time now to ask those you trust and your doctor the questions you have about taking the vaccine, so you can decide and be ready when a vaccine is available. This fact sheet outlines some important things to consider about COVID-19 vaccines. You can also use this fact sheet to talk with others about the vaccine.

### When will the vaccine be available?

COVID-19 vaccines will first be available for people who have the most exposure to COVID-19, such as hospital workers, and those most likely to have serious complications or die from COVID-19.

In [Oregon's 1a Vaccine Sequencing Plan](#), people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their care providers are prioritized because of the exposure when delivering care, and serious risk for people with I/DD.

Public health officials anticipate the COVID-19 vaccine will be available for the I/DD system as follows:

- Group 2 (from 1a): Residents of I/DD foster care or group homes and staff in those settings.
- Group 3 (from 1a): Those who live at home and experience a medical condition or disability that requires outside support workers to deliver services in their home. Also, Personal Support Workers (PSWs) and Direct Support Professionals delivering in home supports and day services.

### What is COVID-19 and what are the risks if I get it?

COVID-19 is the disease causing the pandemic. It is a virus that can be mild, like a cold or flu, but sometimes can cause serious illness and even death.

### What are some of the benefits of the COVID-19 Vaccine?

Vaccines provide protection against getting serious diseases. Vaccines also help protect our friends, neighbors and communities by reducing the number of people

who could get the diseases. When enough people are vaccinated, these diseases tend to stop spreading.

- The current COVID-19 vaccines have been shown to be effective in preventing the spread of COVID-19.
- The vaccine will be an important tool to end the COVID-19 pandemic. This will make it safer to return to activities we all stopped since the pandemic began.

### **What are some of the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine?**

You should speak with your doctor before getting the COVID-19 vaccine. You will want to know whether your health care provider recommends you take the vaccine when it is available for you.

Speak with your vaccination provider about all your medical conditions.

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.

### **Do I have to get vaccinated?**

- Getting the COVID-19 vaccine is your choice. There is no requirement from ODDS to get the COVID-19 vaccine.

### **Who can help me to decide about whether to take the vaccine?**

- You (or a guardian if you have one) will decide whether to get vaccinated.
- You can use trusted family members, friends, or professionals (like your health care provider) for support to make a decision.
- You can always ask more questions, ask for information to be rephrased, or ask to have the information be provided in a way you understand.
- If you have appointed someone to help you with medical decisions, like a health care representative or health care advocate, they can help you decide if the vaccine is right for you.

Vaccination gives us hope that the pandemic will end, but in the meantime, we need to continue safety measures to keep the virus from spreading: wear a mask, physically distance from others, wash your hands, avoid gatherings, and stay home when you're sick.

### **How Can I Learn More?**

Oregon Phase 1a Vaccination Sequencing Plan:

<https://sharedsystems.dhsoha.state.or.us/DHSForms/Served/le3527.pdf>

Oregon Health Authority COVID-19 Vaccine: <https://covidvaccine.oregon.gov>