



Health Alert Network Message 21-22: Expansion of COVID-19 Vaccination Eligibility in Louisiana

Origination Date:
March 9, 2021

Revision Dates (List All Revision Dates):

Expansion of COVID-19 vaccine eligibility criteria in Louisiana to include individuals aged 18-64 with certain high-risk medical conditions (or 16+ for Pfizer vaccine only), and staff working in congregate settings

The State of Louisiana is announcing an expansion of the criteria for Phase 1b, Tier 1 of the COVID-19 vaccination campaign. This expansion, effective March 9th, 2021, includes all persons previously available in Phases 1a and 1b, Tier 1 and expands Phase 1b, Tier 1 to include:

- Individuals **aged 18-64** (or 16+ for Pfizer vaccine only) with at least one of the conditions listed by the CDC as placing them at an “increased risk of severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19.” The CDC list of conditions can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-withmedical-conditions.html>.
 - Cancer
 - Chronic kidney disease
 - COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
 - Down Syndrome
 - Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease or cardiomyopathies
 - Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
 - Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30kg/m² or higher but < 40kg/m²)
 - Severe obesity (BMIC >40kg/m²)
 - Sickle Cell Disease
 - Smoking
 - Type 2 diabetes mellitus

- Individuals aged **18-64** (or 16+ for Pfizer vaccine only) with at least one of the conditions listed by the CDC that indicates they “might be at an increased risk of severe illness from the virus that causes COVID-19.” The CDC list of conditions can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-withmedical-conditions.html>.
 - Asthma (moderate-to-severe)
 - Cerebrovascular disease (affects blood vessels and blood supply to the brain)
 - Cystic fibrosis
 - Hypertension or high blood pressure

- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines
- Chronic liver disease
- Overweight (BMI > 25 kg/m², but < 30 kg/m²)
- Pulmonary fibrosis (having damaged or scarred lung tissues)
- Severe neurologic conditions such as dementia
- Thalassemia (a type of blood disorder)
- Type 1 diabetes mellitus

Important: Persons with above medical conditions should be instructed to complete the **Louisiana COVID-19 Vaccine Attestation Form** which is attached to this Health Alert and will be posted on the Louisiana COVID Vaccination website.

- Any staff working in congregate facilities (such as prisons/jail staff, shelter staff, dorm staff, rehab/detox center staff, group home staff)

The following groups remain eligible for the vaccine under Phase 1b Tier 1:

- Persons ages 65 years or older.
- Teachers and any other support staff working onsite in K-12 schools or daycares
- Teachers and staff actively working onsite should bring their employee badge or paystub
- All pregnant persons, regardless of age
- Providers/staff of Nonemergency Medical Transportation Services (NEMT), to be added to the currently eligible “ambulatory and outpatient providers and staff” category
- Election workers (poll workers) assigned to work the March and April 2021 elections whom carry a letter stating they have been selected, along with their ID.
- Health-related support personnel (lab staff, mortuary staff who have contact with corpses, pharmacy staff)
- Outpatient clinic providers and clinic staff
- Urgent care clinic providers and staff
- Community care clinic providers and staff
- Behavioral health providers and staff
- Dialysis providers and recipients
- Professional home care providers (including hospice workers) and home care recipients (including older and younger people with disabilities over the age of 16 who receive community or home-based care, as well as clients of home health agencies)
- Dental providers and staff
- American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters and Support Service Providers (SSP’s) working in community and clinic-based settings, and clients who are both deaf and blind
- Students, residents, faculty and staff of allied health schools
- Louisiana Unified Command Group and essential COVID response personnel (requires prior designation by state authorities)
- Police and other first responders
- State legislators

COVID-19 Vaccine Providers:

- Providers should have self-attestation forms printed and available for patients who are to be vaccinated by virtue of a qualifying underlying medical condition. Patients are also able and encouraged to print the form at home and bring with them if they are able.
- You must keep all self-attestation forms for those claiming high-risk medical conditions for a period of 6 months, in a HIPAA-safe manner. After 6 months these may be destroyed. These records may be requested and audited if necessary.
- Providers can incorporate the self-attestation form into their online scheduling platforms. However, they must be able to retain an electronic copy for each patient.
- Other “proof” of a high-risk health condition, beyond self-attestation, is not necessary.
- Attestation need only occur on the first dose, not the second dose (for those vaccines requiring two doses).

All providers of COVID-19 Vaccines must follow the priority group guidance listed on the LDH COVID-19 Vaccination page, and NOT determine their own criteria for vaccine eligibility.