

# Philadelphia COVID-19 Vaccine Newsletter

## Philadelphia Department of Public Health

### The Latest Numbers

- 266,921 people have been fully vaccinated and 523,893 people have received at least 1 dose of vaccine in Philadelphia as of March 31, 2021.
- Updates with the latest information are available on the [Philadelphia COVID-19 Vaccine Dashboard](#) and the [Weekly Vaccine Distribution Update](#).

### Latest Vaccine News

- Cases are increasing for all age groups in the city, but people over age 65 are more likely to experience severe illness and death from COVID-19. It is very important to get everyone over 65+ vaccinated!
  - Register your interest to get vaccinated with the [Vaccine Interest Form](#) or call 3-1-1.
  - [#VaxUpPhilly](#) campaign launched to encourage Philadelphia residents to get vaccinated.
    - Over the next few months, PDPH will share videos, blogs, social media messages, and more to help Philadelphians learn more about the vaccine.
- Changes have been made to [who is eligible to get vaccinated in Phase 1b](#).
  - Members of clergy, people with intellectual disabilities and some with immunocompromised conditions have been added.
- The Esperanza Charter School will host a large Type 2 vaccination clinic in partnership with FEMA and PDPH, scheduled to open the week of April 5. Full briefing [here](#).
  - This site will deliver 1,500–2,500 vaccinations per day.
  - Staff can assist in many different languages or with any access and functional needs.
- The Center City Vaccination Center is now only offering second doses of Pfizer vaccine
  - After everyone who is eligible gets their second doses, the Center City Vaccination Center will reconfigure again to provide the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine
  - More information on second dose appointments available [here](#).
- **Need a free ride to and from your vaccine appointment?**
  - SEPTA transit passes are available to community partners.
  - Community shuttle service can be arranged for groups of 20 – 100 with 3 days advance notice.
    - E-mail: [oem@phila.gov](mailto:oem@phila.gov).
  - SEPTA CCT expanded to include vaccine appointments. Call 3-1-1 and select option 5.
  - Seniors ride FREE and reduced fare for people with disabilities under age 65.
    - Scan a PA drivers license issued before 2017 or register for a Senior Ride Free Card by calling 215-580-7145 and press #6.
- Information on how you can [volunteer to support COVID vaccination](#) efforts.

### FAQ on the Top 3 Concerns People Have About the Vaccine

#### 1) Concern over side effects.

- Potential short-term side effects include a sore arm, general muscle aches, headache, fatigue, chills, and fever.

## FAQ on the Top 3 Concerns People Have About the Vaccine (continued)

- These side effects are signals that your immune system is working.

### 2) Concern that the vaccines were developed too quickly.

- COVID-19 vaccines are being held to the same safety standards as all vaccines, which are very strict. All vaccines were tested in large clinical trials, which included diverse populations, older adults, and people with underlying medical conditions but researchers used existing networks to conduct COVID-19 vaccine trials.
- FDA's Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) is a process that helps manage the use of medicines and vaccines during public health emergencies, such as the current pandemic. FDA and CDC are prioritizing review and authorization of COVID-19 vaccines due to the public health emergency.
- Technology had been previously developed and was applied to these new vaccines and manufacturing began while clinical trials are still underway. Normally, manufacturing doesn't begin until after completion of the trials.

### 3) A desire to learn more about how well the vaccines work.

- Pfizer, Moderna and the Johnson & Johnson vaccines teach your body how to make the spike protein found on the COVID-19 virus.
  - Once your immune system recognizes the spike protein, it creates antibodies.
  - These antibodies are the proteins that fight infections.
  - Antibodies stay in your body and can fight off COVID-19 if you are exposed.
- None of the COVID-19 vaccines can change our DNA in any way.
- These vaccines DO NOT contain COVID-19 virus and CANNOT give you COVID-19.
- Still have questions? Check out the [COVID-19 Vaccine FAQ page](#).

## How to Get a Vaccine through PDPH

- **COVID-19 Vaccine Interest Forms:** The City has two forms to help Philadelphians register their interest in receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. These forms are not for registering for an appointment, but will tell the Department of Public Health how to contact you when you are eligible and vaccine is available for you.
  - 1) Members of the public are encouraged to register using the COVID-19 [Vaccine Interest Form](#). The form is available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and French. Individuals who do not have access to the internet can contact Philly311 (dial 3-1-1) for help completing the interest form.
  - 2) Employers are encouraged to complete the [Workforce COVID-19 Vaccine Planning Form](#). Employers that complete this form will be contacted to help set up opportunities to vaccinate their prioritized staff when they are eligible and vaccine is available.

## How to Stay Connected

- Text COVIDPHL to 888-777 to receive updates to your phone.
- Questions or feedback? Email [COVIDVax@phila.gov](mailto:COVIDVax@phila.gov).
- **Is your community struggling to get information about COVID protection and vaccine?**
  - [Request a presentation or meeting](#) with a PDPH representative.
- This newsletter is distributed to the [Community Response Partner Network](#). Sign up to receive this and other essential information, then pass it on to your family, friends and community.