



## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### COVID-19 Vaccine for Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) Services

**Note:** Questions gathered from listening session on Dec. 21, 2020 and posted Jan. 12, 2021.

**Note:** General COVID-19 vaccine questions and answers are on the Oregon Health Authority website: <https://covidvaccine.oregon.gov/>

#### Individuals/Families

**Question:** Do I get to choose which vaccine I receive?

**Answer:** No. Oregon has prioritized the Pfizer vaccine for the federal pharmacy partnership program. At this time CVS, Walgreens and Consonus will be holding clinics at facilities where they provide only the Pfizer vaccine. As vaccine supply varies in the coming months, Moderna, or other vaccine products, may be allocated to this program.

**Question:** How do I find out when my home will be provided vaccinations?

**Answer:** Your I/DD foster/group home will be contacted by one of the three pharmacies to set a date for the vaccination program within your facility.

**Question:** Do I have to agree to get the vaccine and how is my doctor involved in this decision?

**Answer:** The vaccine will not be given to anyone that does not want it. The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) strongly recommends vaccination for the safety and health of the entire community. Please see the [ODDS vaccine choice fact sheet](#) for reference.

**Question:** Can a health care representative consent for the person? What about a guardian?

**Answer:** 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.

**Question:** If I have already had COVID-19, can I still get the vaccine?

**Answer:** Yes. COVID-19 vaccination should be offered to people regardless of a history of COVID-19 infection. Those that are symptomatic and actively infected with COVID-19 should wait several weeks to one month before being vaccinated.

**Question:** My daughter has autism with moderate intellectual developmental disability and a mask “phobia.” Her two Personal Support Workers don’t wear masks when working with her due to her phobia with the masks. How do we find out when people like my daughter can get the vaccine?

**Answer:** As of Jan. 5, 2021, OHA has indicated that anyone in Phase 1a, groups 1-4, may get the vaccine. The Oregon Health Authority has developed a [priority list](#) for the first phases of vaccination. The groups for the I/DD service system are listed in a [ODDS Phase 1a Fact Sheet](#).

**Question:** Do you know if you have to test negative first before getting the vaccine?

**Answer:** You do not need to have a negative test result before getting the vaccine.

**Question:** Can you get the vaccine if you are positive? What if you’re asymptomatic and positive and then get the vaccine? Does this create additional risks or chance of side effects?

**Answer:** According to OHA, studies show no additional risk for asymptomatic people with a positive test when they get the vaccine. Those that are symptomatic and actively infected with COVID-19 should wait several weeks to one month before being vaccinated. There are no additional side effects as a result of getting the vaccine when asymptomatic but positive.

**Question:** What can I expect when I get the vaccine? Will I get sick?

**Answer:** According to the FDA, the most common side effects found in the vaccine trials included pain, redness or swelling at the injection site, fatigue, headache, chills, muscle pain and joint pain. After being

vaccinated, you will be monitored for at least 15 minutes so health care professionals can check for any reactions. OHA has more information on its [website](#).

**Question:** ODDS reported that parents/guardians of medically fragile children will be included in Group 3. What about other adult family members who live with the child will be included?

**Answer:** All adult household members living with a child or adult who has an intellectual or developmental disability, including those considered to be medically fragile, will have access to the vaccine.

**Question:** What is the criteria to determine if a youth is 'medically fragile'?

**Answer:** Children and adults who have I/DD generally fall into this category. As of Jan. 5, 2021, OHA has told Local Public Health Authorities (LPHA) to offer vaccines to everyone in all Groups 1 – 4 in Phase 1a. All people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) and their caregivers or providers are included in Phase 1a.

**Question:** Can all the person's caregivers/PSWs get vaccinated at the same time as the individual? What if we want to ensure that staff don't all get ill at the same time?

**Answer:** Yes. All caregivers and people living with an individual may be vaccinated at the same time. The extent to which that can or will happen will depend on how the LPHA is offering access to the vaccine. Most people have mild to moderate reactions to the vaccine. No more than 5-10 percent of people feel poorly enough the next day to take a day off. SEIU and the Oregon Home Care Commission are coordinating vaccinations for Personal Support Workers.

**Question:** When will families know that the Pfizer vaccines are available for youth 16-18?

**Answer:** LPHAs are organizing vaccination clinics in local areas for all people in Phase 1a. Contact your Services Coordinator to find out when vaccination clinics may be happening in your area.

**Question:** How will families/individuals know when they are eligible for vaccines?

**Answer:** All groups in Phase 1a, which includes people with I/DD and their providers, are eligible for vaccinations now. Follow information from your

local LPHA and coordinate with your Services Coordinator or Personal Agent to find out when vaccination clinics may be happening in your area.

**Question:** Is there a number of days after a flu vaccine that I need to wait until the COVID Vaccines?

**Answer:** Avoid getting the flu vaccine or other vaccines for 14 days before or after COVID-19 vaccination. If someone inadvertently receives the COVID-19 vaccination along with another vaccine, there is no need to repeat the dose of either vaccine.

**Question:** If I get Pfizer as a first dose, do I need to stay with Pfizer for the second dose or can I get Moderna?

**Answer:** Those who received one or the other vaccine from Pfizer or Moderna, should receive the second dose from the same manufacturer.

**Question:** Is ODDS planning a 'vaccine passport' that can be downloaded on an phone as proof? Other countries have done this.

**Answer:** ODDS will not be providing proof of vaccination. When a person is vaccinated, the entity providing the vaccine will provide a card with a date/time of the vaccine.

**Question:** What if I can't get my second shot by the identified date?

**Answer:** Connect with your health care professional and still do try to get the second vaccine. You do not need to restart the vaccination schedule.

**Question:** Will I still need to wear a mask after I've had the vaccine?

**Answer:** Yes, people need to continue to wear a mask and observe other COVID-19 protocols such as physical distancing and washing your hands until there is further data to determine changes to these practices.

**Question:** When can I go back to my favorite activities, such as going to the movies?

**Answer:** A lot depends on when the national and state public health emergency and the Governor's Executive Order ends. Participating in certain activities also depends on where your county is in terms of risk levels and what is open in your area.

**Question:** I have more health questions about the vaccine, where do I go for more information?

**Answer:** The Oregon Health Authority [COVID-19 vaccine website](#), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [COVID-19 vaccine website](#) and your health care provider are resources.

## **Providers**

**Question:** We have people who cannot consent and do not have guardians or Health Advocates. I am concerned we will miss their chance to get vaccinated, but I also want to make sure we have the right consent. One idea that is going around is that the ISP Team can have a discussion record, but my understanding is they could approve but not consent. So would a doctor's order be appropriate?

**Answer:** Discuss this question with the local pharmacy or LPHA before taking a person to get the vaccine.

**Question:** What is the division of labor with these vaccination clinics, in other words, what specifically will my home be asked to do so I can prepare and line up resources?

**Answer:** If your home is enrolled in the Pharmacy Partnership, the pharmacy partner will indicate what support they need from you. Pharmacy partners have also made some information available online that may give you a clearer understanding of the roles and expectations. Learn more about your pharmacy program:

CVS/Omnicare: [www.omnicare.com/covid-19-vaccine-resource](http://www.omnicare.com/covid-19-vaccine-resource)

Walgreens: [www.walgreens.com/topic/findcare/long-term-care-facilitycovid-vaccine.jsp#faq](http://www.walgreens.com/topic/findcare/long-term-care-facilitycovid-vaccine.jsp#faq)

Consonus: [www.consonushealth.com/covid-19-pharmacy-updates/](http://www.consonushealth.com/covid-19-pharmacy-updates/)

**Question:** Will CVS, Walgreens and Consonus supply information to our residents in advance to answer their questions?

**Answer:** Yes. Settings can ask the federal pharmacy partners for information to share with residents.

**Question:** How will I know if my agency home is part of the Pharmacy Partnership program?

**Answer:** Providers that have been contacted by either Walgreens, Consonus or CVS will continue to work with those pharmacies to plan and access vaccinations. Providers who have not been contacted by one of the pharmacy partners, are no longer receiving communications from the

pharmacy partners, or have been told you are no longer eligible, need to work with the local public health authority (LPHA) and case management entity to identify opportunities to attend vaccine clinics.

**Question:** How should I coordinate with residents' health care providers?

**Answer:** Residents will receive a card indicating their receipt of a vaccine. The responsibility is on the provider and the resident to inform their healthcare provider. The federal pharmacy program and clinics are conducted independently from a patient's general healthcare services.

**Question:** Does ODDS plan on sending out guidance in regards to ISP Teams having conversations with individuals about the vaccine?

**Answer:** ODDS has developed a [fact sheet](#) to help an individual understand how the vaccine may help them.

**Question:** It is my understanding that ODDS will not be requiring individuals nor staff to get the vaccine. Is this still the case and do you see that changing at all?

**Answer:** ODDS does not expect to require anyone to be vaccinated. Individual employers can set their own requirements for staff but no individuals with I/DD will be required to be vaccinated.

**Question:** Will Personal Support Workers (PSWs) be a priority for getting vaccinated?

**Answer:** PSWs are included in Phase 1a, along with other staff providing in-home services to people with I/DD.

**Question:** Will PSWs get vaccine at the same time as the people they support? Or will individuals have access before PSWs?

**Answer:** People with I/DD receiving in-home services and support staff that provide those services, including PSWs, are prioritized together in Group 3 of Phase 1a.

**Question:** If an individual enters a congregate care (group home or foster home) after the facility has been vaccinated, will someone be available to vaccinate the person who just moved in?

**Answer:** This is a question to ask the provider agency or the LPHA.

**Question:** What if an individual refuses to wear a mask, will that be a problem for the person administering the vaccination?

**Answer:** This is part of the coordination and communication that providers can help with prior to pharmacy partners coming to the home to provide the vaccine.

**Question:** What if an individual in foster/group or in-home chooses not to have the vaccine during their Group priority and then later change their mind, will they have to wait until the general population is prioritized? Who should they contact?

**Answer:** Everyone is encouraged to get a vaccine when as soon as it becomes available to them. If a person chooses not to get vaccinated at that time, they will need to work with their medical provider and Local Public Health Authority to determine when they will be able to get a vaccine in the future.

**Question:** What is the definition of a caregiver? Does it include paid people through a CDDP?

**Answer:** Yes. All paid and unpaid people providing support to an individual with an intellectual or developmental disability are considered a caregiver regardless of who is paying them (or not paying them) to provide care.

**Question:** Can an individual or employer require that a DSP or PSW be vaccinated?

**Answer:** Employers can require vaccinations or they can choose to only hire people who have had the vaccine.

**Question:** How will insurance pay for this vaccine?

**Answer:** Federal law requires insurance companies pay for the vaccine. No person can be charged any money for the vaccine. If a person runs into trouble with insurance companies, the state is here to help navigate.