



**LAC DPH Health Advisory:
2023-2024 COVID-19 Vaccines**
September 14, 2023



*This message is intended for all healthcare providers.
Please distribute as appropriate.*

Key Messages

- The CDC [recommends](#) everyone 6 months and older receive a 2023–2024 COVID-19 vaccine (monovalent mRNA, XBB.1.5) to protect against the potentially serious outcomes of COVID-19. Some children 6 months through 4 years of age and immunocompromised individuals may need more than 1 vaccine dose.
- Vaccine providers must now use traditional pathways for COVID-19 vaccine procurement, distribution, and payment for both privately insured and public payers. Vaccines should still be provided to all patients free of charge.
- Vaccine will be available to uninsured children and adults for free through the Vaccine for Children Program and Bridge Access Program, respectively.
- Providers who do not offer the vaccines can advise patients, including those who are un- or underinsured, to find a vaccination location at ph.lacounty.gov/vaccines. Vaccines will start to become available by the end of this week.

Situation

In LA County, SARS-CoV-2 cases and hospitalizations have been [increasing](#). Older adults and persons with weakened immune systems are at greatest risk for hospitalization and death from COVID-19. In addition, healthy children and adults can still experience severe disease due to COVID-19.

COVID-19 vaccination remains the best protection against COVID-19-related morbidity and mortality. The new “updated” (2023-2024 formula) monovalent mRNA vaccines provide protection against the Omicron variant XBB.1.5 and all its related sub lineages, including BA.2.86 and EG.5. As new SARS-CoV-2 strains emerge and levels of neutralizing antibodies from previous infection and vaccinations decline, vaccination provides enhanced protection against the variants currently responsible for most infections and hospitalizations in the US.

On September 11, the [FDA released](#) their decision on the use of these updated vaccines. The updated Pfizer and Moderna mRNA vaccines (2023-2024 formula) are approved for individuals 12 years of age and older and are authorized under emergency use for individuals 6 months through 11 years of age. The bivalent mRNA vaccines are no longer authorized for use. Novavax vaccines are still authorized for use for persons

aged 12 years and older while an updated Novavax vaccine is under FDA review.

On September 12, the [CDC recommended](#) that everyone 6 months and older get a 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine if they have not received a dose in the past 2 months. The COVID-19 vaccine recommendations* have been simplified:

- People ages 5 years and older get a single dose of the 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine, regardless of their prior vaccination history.
- Children 6 months through 4 years of age get at least one dose of the 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine. They may need additional doses based on their prior COVID-19 vaccine history.
- People who are 6 months of age or older who are moderately or severely immunocompromised should get at least one dose of the 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine. They may receive additional doses.

*Proposed recommendations in [ACIP slides](#). For details, see updated CDC [Interim Clinical Considerations](#) (*still pending as of 9/14/23*).

COVID-19 vaccine distribution has transitioned from a federal procurement and distribution model to a public/private model. This means that the vaccines are obtained through traditional procurement channels. COVID-19 vaccines should be provided to all patients at no cost. Coverage will be as follows:

- For insured patients, vaccine is covered by private insurers, MediCal, Medi Care Part B, and Medicare Part D.
- For uninsured adults and adults whose insurance does not cover all COVID-19 vaccine costs, vaccine will be available through the [Bridge Access Program](#).
- For uninsured/underinsured children, vaccines will be available through the California Vaccines for Children Program (VFC).

Patients can find information about how to get 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccines at ph.lacounty.gov/vaccines.

Actions Requested of Providers

If you are a vaccine provider:

- **Order the 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine now** if you have not already done so. For information regarding how to order, see the [COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Hub](#).
- **Register as a vaccine provider** on myturn.ca.gov and vaccines.gov if your practice can offer vaccine to the general public.
- **Offer COVID-19 vaccines now and throughout the fall and winter** to patients ages 6 months and older to protect them from severe disease.
- **Coadminister COVID-19 vaccines with other recommended vaccines.** Routine administration of all age-appropriate doses of vaccines at the same visit is [recommended](#) by the CDC if there are no contraindications. Coadministration

of COVID-19 vaccine with other vaccines can help ensure that people are better protected. This is especially important for older adults and others at increased risk of complications from respiratory viruses.

- **Have a member of your vaccine team attend [DPH hosted office hours](#)** for regular updates.

If you are not a vaccine provider:

- **Recommend the 2023-2024 COVID-19 vaccine to all patients ages 6 months and older to protect them from severe disease.** Refer them to ph.lacounty.gov/vaccines to find locations offering vaccination. They may also call the Public Health Call Center at 1-833-540-0473 if they need help finding a vaccine or are homebound.

Additional Resources

Webinars:

- CDC/IDSA clinician webinar: [COVID-19 New Booster Vaccine & Variants Update; Plus, Updates on RSV, Influenza and Pneumococcal Immunizations](#) Today, September 14 12 PM PST. Recording will be posted on the [IDSA multimedia webpage](#).
- CDC COCA webinar: [Preparing for the Upcoming Respiratory Virus Season: Recommendations for Influenza, COVID-19, and RSV Vaccines for Older Adults](#) Tuesday, September 19, 2023 11 AM-12 PM PST. Free CME.

Resources:

- [CDC Interim Clinical Considerations](#) Pending updates as of 9/14/23.
- CDPH [COVID-19 vaccine commercialization FAQ](#).
- Slide decks from September 12, 2023 [ACIP meeting](#), including on the [Bridge Access Program](#) and [Evidence to Recommendations](#).

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