

PROVIDER ALERT

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Medi-Cal and COVID-19 Vaccine Q & A

With the recent federal approval of COVID-19 vaccines, the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) is seeking federal approval to help support delivery of the vaccine to all Medi-Cal members. The vaccine will be provided at no cost to all Californians. The following series of questions and answers (Q & As) provides information regarding who is covered, how to get vaccinated and how DHCS plans to reimburse providers for the administration fee tied to the vaccine under Medi-Cal.

Who is covered to get vaccinated?

All full-scope Medi-Cal members are covered and will receive the vaccine at no cost. Coverage is also extended to people enrolled in restricted-scope Medi-Cal, the COVID-19 Uninsured Group Program, as well as the Family Planning, Access, Care and Treatment (FPACT) program.

In Orange County, eligibility has been expanded to include all people age 65 and older, greatly extending access beyond the frontline health care workers and long-term care facility residents who got the first doses. Distribution will continue to expand until vaccines are available to everyone, which is estimated to be by the summer.

Where and when are vaccinations being administered?

California's plan for administering the vaccine is initially limited and split into phases. More details on those phases, including who is covered in each one, and on the vaccination roll-out in general, are available in the vaccination section of the California for All COVID-19 website at <https://covid19.ca.gov/vaccines/#When-can-I-get-vaccinated>.

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is working with local agencies to distribute COVID-19 vaccines. Local health departments are identifying facilities that have the capacity to properly maintain the vaccine while meeting all federal and state requirements. Enrollment in the vaccine distribution program is limited at this time to providers authorized by their local health department. Others may enroll as vaccine supply increases.

Locally members may look to their providers for information about vaccine distribution, which given the current limited vaccine supply is in phases that prioritize critical populations (to view phases visit <https://coronavirus.egovoc.com/covid-19-vaccination-distribution>). Additionally, Orange County is using an online tool, www.othena.com, to help with vaccine prioritization and scheduling. CalOptima encourages you to be familiar with it to assist in answering questions from members.

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Who do providers bill?

As the federal government will pay for the initial vaccines, there is no Medi-Cal provider reimbursement for the COVID-19 vaccine itself. Providers will bill for administration of the COVID-19 vaccine on medical, outpatient or pharmacy claims. DHCS will reimburse providers the vaccine administration for all covered Medi-Cal populations exclusively through the Medi-Cal Fee-for-Service (FFS) delivery system. This includes administration to individuals enrolled in Medi-Cal managed-care health plans.

What is the reimbursement rate that DHCS will pay?

DHCS is seeking federal approval to pay all providers up to the Medicare rate for COVID-19 vaccinations, subject to Medi-Cal FFS policy. The maximum allowable rate for a single-dose vaccine is \$28.39; the maximum for a double-dose vaccine is \$16.94 for the initial dose and \$28.39 for the final dose (\$45.33 total).

What about Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), Rural Health Clinics, (RHCs) and Tribal Health Clinics (THCs)?

DHCS will pay the applicable Prospective Payment System (PPS) under the all-inclusive rate (AIR), if the vaccination is administered during an in-person visit that meets the requirements of a billable office visit in the clinic setting. If the vaccine administration does not meet all of the requirements of a billable visit (e.g. only vaccine administration), the FQHC, RHC and THC can bill Medi-Cal FFS for administering the COVID-19 vaccine and be reimbursed the applicable dosage rate as noted above.

Other resources

There is more COVID-19 vaccine information on the DHCS website, including:

- Frequently Asked Questions (<https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/Documents/COVID-19/COVID-19-Vaccine-Administration-FAQs-122420.pdf>)
- COVID-19 vaccine administration letter to Medi-Cal managed care plans (<https://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/Documents/MMCDAPLsandPolicyLetters/APL2020/APL20-022.pdf>)
- The California for All COVID-19 website links to county COVID-19 websites (<https://covid19.ca.gov/get-local-information/>)

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