

PROVIDER

ALERT

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State Expands Vaccine Eligibility to Californians Based on Expected Supply Increases

On March 25, 2021, California Governor Gavin Newsom announced the supply of COVID-19 vaccines is expected to significantly increase in the coming weeks, which will allow the state to expand vaccine eligibility to more Californians.

Effective April 1, 2021, individuals age 50 and older are eligible to make an appointment to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, with individuals age 16 and older eligible to make an appointment to be vaccinated beginning April 15, 2021.

Based on current estimates, California expects to be allocated approximately 2.5 million first and second doses per week the first half of April and more than 3 million doses during the second half of April. California currently receives roughly 1.8 million doses per week. These estimates may be adjusted going forward. The state has the capacity to administer more than 3 million vaccines per week and is building the capacity to administer 4 million vaccines weekly by the end of April 2021.

Governor Newsom stressed the focus remains on equity as the state extends vaccine eligibility. In addition to increased allocations of vaccines to providers serving the hardest hit communities, the state has embarked on a series of initiatives to vaccinate those populations that have faced the highest rates of COVID-19 infections before vaccines become available to the entire age 16 and older population. These efforts include:

- Provider funding for programs to reach and vaccinate communities facing the biggest health disparities
- Working with organized labor to reach essential workers
- Partnering with agricultural organizations and community-based organizations to vaccinate agricultural workers
- Allowing providers to target by ZIP code via **My Turn Covid-19 Scheduling System** with single-use codes (scheduled to begin March 2021)
- Supporting a subset of community-based organizations currently partnering with the state on COVID-19 education to provide direct vaccination appointment assistance
- Prioritizing currently eligible populations and allowing providers the discretion to vaccinate those who live in high-impact areas (County Healthy Places Index [HPI] quartiles 1 and 2) including families

Along with the expanded eligibility and to align with upcoming federal guidance, California will update its vaccine allocation methodology. This will transition over a four-week period beginning with the March 22, 2021 allocation (delivered to providers the following week), from one based on the distribution of the 65 and older population, workers in the agriculture and food, education and child care, and emergency services sectors to one based on the distribution of the 16 and older population statewide. This will be done in conjunction with completion of the shift to the state directly allocating vaccines to providers. The state will continue to double the amount of vaccine allocated to the lowest HPI quartile as announced March 4, 2021 (to view visit <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2021/03/04/california-leads-with-public-health-and-vaccine-equity-to-safely-and-sustainably-reopen/>).

To review this announcement in its entirety, visit <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2021/03/25/state-expands-vaccine-eligibility-to-50-californians-starting-april-1-and-all-individuals-16-on-april-15-based-on-expected-supply-increases/>.