



Phase 1a: Unaffiliated Workers

COVID-19 Vaccination Phase 1a Guidance for Workers Not Getting the Vaccine from their Employer

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) has identified Phase 1a as the initial phase of the COVID-19 vaccination program.

Phase 1a includes:

- High-risk workers in health care settings
- High-risk first responders
- Residents and staff of nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and other community-based, congregate living settings where most individuals over 65 years of age are receiving care, supervision, or assistance
- Once these categories are completed, all workers in health care settings may be vaccinated

Unaffiliated workers, or people who qualify for the vaccine in Phase 1a but whose employers aren't offering the vaccine directly, may be able to get the vaccine from another provider. The Department of Health is recommending the use of a voucher letter for workers to get their vaccinations from providers they are not affiliated with.



Identify

Employers identify workers that meet the Phase 1a criteria.



Provide

Employers provide eligible workers with a voucher letter.



Obtain

Eligible employees use the voucher letter to obtain the vaccine.

Employers Identify Eligible Workers

Employers must identify workers who meet eligibility guidelines for Phase 1a. The objectives during Phase 1a are to protect those at highest risk of exposure, maintain a functioning health system, and protect highly vulnerable populations.

High-risk workers in health care settings and high-risk first responders—who have direct patient contact (within six feet) and are unable to telework—are eligible for Phase 1a vaccination. That includes:

- Personnel who provide services to patients or patients' family members
- Personnel who handle infectious materials
- Personnel at inpatient or outpatient settings

For complete Phase 1a eligibility guidelines, refer to [WA State COVID-19 Vaccine Allocation Guidance for Phase 1a](#).

Employers Provide a Voucher Letter

Employers who are not offering the vaccine directly should provide workers with a letter verifying that they meet Phase 1a eligibility guidelines as specified by the Department of Health.

The voucher letters should identify the individual worker by name and be issued to the worker as soon as possible. When issuing the voucher letter, employers should:

- Instruct workers to make an appointment with a vaccine provider that is open to unaffiliated workers.
- Provide workers with the instructions on this page to get vaccinated.
- Remind workers to bring employee identification or state or federal issued identification to the appointment.

To request this document in another format, call 1-800-525-0127. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 (Washington Relay) or email civil.rights@doh.wa.gov.

Eligible Workers Get Vaccinated

Once the employee has the voucher letter, they should:

1. Refer to [this list](#) to find a local vaccine provider who is offering vaccines to unaffiliated workers.
2. Contact a provider to make an appointment to be vaccinated.
3. Visit the provider at the time of the appointment to obtain your vaccination. Bring the voucher letter and identification (employee ID or state or federal issued ID).
4. Make an appointment for the second dose of the vaccine. Workers should get their second dose 21 days (Pfizer-BioNTech) or 28 days (Moderna) after the first dose.
5. Report any adverse events to the [Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System](#) (VAERS).
6. Go to the second appointment and get the second dose of the vaccine to be fully protected from the virus.



COVID-19 Vaccine Program

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