



Oct. 7, 2020

Dear Colleague,

The State of Texas continues to see the spread of COVID-19 in our communities. While precautions like mask-wearing and physical distancing reduce transmission, COVID-19 vaccinations will be a crucial component in combatting this disease and ending the pandemic in Texas. I am confident you understand the enormous potential benefit that effective COVID-19 vaccines can provide.

Initially, vaccine supplies will be limited, and vaccine will be distributed through the federal government and the states. Therefore, it is critical that Texas healthcare providers register to provide vaccines with the Department of State Health Services (DSHS). This is an essential first step for you to be able to receive and provide vaccine to your patients in the coming months. You will not be able to receive vaccine without registering.

I urge Texas providers, including clinics, healthcare facilities and pharmacies, to enroll to become COVID-19 vaccine providers. The following information provides a high-level overview of how COVID-19 vaccination distribution will take place, and how you can participate in alleviating the effects of the pandemic.

How Providers Register to Become COVID-19 Vaccinators

Texas providers wishing to administer COVID-19 vaccine must register through the registration portal at [EnrollTexasIZ.dshs.texas.gov](https://enrolltexasiz.dshs.texas.gov). This website will enroll providers to receive and administer vaccines for the duration of the program. Only providers registered through this site are eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccines within Texas. Vaccines and supplies like needles, syringes and alcohol prep pads will be distributed directly by McKesson Corporation to provider offices.

Provider Requirements

Per federal requirements, providers must agree to administer vaccine regardless of a recipient's ability to pay, provide a vaccination record to each recipient, store doses of vaccine under the proper conditions, and report the number of doses received and used. COVID-19 vaccine providers must track their COVID-19 vaccine activities and submit that information through DSHS online portals.

Timeline of Vaccine Availability

Texas will employ a tiered system for vaccine administration, per federal guidelines to manage the initially lower vaccine supplies. The anticipated phases are:

- *November–December 2020*: During this phase, Texas will identify providers and/or employers servicing targeted and prioritized populations, such as healthcare workers and other essential workers. DSHS will also conduct outreach and/or recruitment of employers to those target populations.
- *Starting January 2021*: During this phase, vaccines may still be limited to prioritized populations; however, the larger volumes of vaccines available should reduce the need for highly targeted allocations. Once vaccine supply is adequate, providers will be able to regularly place orders for COVID-19 vaccines.

The CDC continues to update states and stakeholders about its requirements for the anticipated vaccine distribution. The situation continues to evolve as trials for double- and single-dose COVID-19 vaccines continue. Accordingly, DSHS will provide registrants with updated information on an ongoing basis as we learn more about the process. Details will be maintained at www.dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/immunize/provider-information.aspx.

If you have any questions or concerns, please call the DSHS COVID-19 Vaccine Provider hotline at 877-835-7750, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday or email COVID19VacEnroll@dshs.texas.gov. Thank you for doing your part to ensure Texans are kept safe and reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our state.

Sincerely,

John Hellerstedt, M.D.
DSHS Commissioner

- Watch a [joint video message](#) from TMA President Dr. Fite and DSHS Commissioner Dr. Hellerstedt on COVID-19 vaccine provider enrollment.