



COVID-19 Vaccination Distribution Implementation Program

Guidance for Wisconsin Employers



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Background

The objectives of the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) COVID-19 Vaccination Program are to:

- Provide technical support and guidance for effective vaccine planning and implementation throughout Wisconsin.
- Ensure fair, safe, and equitable allocation of vaccine across the state of Wisconsin based on current prioritizations of targeted populations.
- Sustain and adapt the infrastructure needed to receive and distribute vaccine with maximum access and minimal dose loss.
- Educate and encourage people in Wisconsin to get vaccinated when the vaccine becomes available to them.

The state is relying on employers to assist in this effort by connecting those employees needing to be vaccinated with vaccine providers, and by raising awareness through trusted communicators about the importance of getting vaccinated.



Purpose

COVID-19 vaccinations are one of the best ways you can protect your business, your employees, and your customers. Investing in the well-being of your employees is an important way to improve employee morale and retention.

By providing information about COVID-19 vaccination and establishing supportive policies and practices, employers can help increase vaccine uptake among Wisconsin's workforce, and help bring an end to the COVID-19 pandemic. Although COVID-19 vaccine supply is currently limited, it is not too early to share clear, complete, and accurate messages, promote confidence in the decision to get vaccinated, and engage your employees in plans to get vaccinated. Strong confidence in the vaccines within your workplace increases the number of people getting vaccinated, which leads to fewer COVID-19 illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths.

This document has been developed to provide guidance for employers to prepare for vaccination either through community efforts or at the workplace.



Start by Building Confidence in COVID-19 Vaccines

Education is key to promoting vaccination and addressing misinformation. DHS has created Wisconsin-specific posters, signs, fact sheets, and graphics in order to ensure all Wisconsinites have the information they need to be protected against COVID-19 and informed about vaccine safety.

To help achieve this, many resources have been translated into Hindi, Hmong, Somali, and Spanish. DHS also has American Sign Language (ASL) videos available. To access these materials or to share with partners, please visit our [Vaccine Partner Resources page](#).

Help Your Employees Feel Confident About Getting the Vaccine

1. Provide information and resources in this guidance document to your employees in all of the languages they commonly use.
2. Implement policies and programs that support getting vaccinated and clearly communicate those programs to your workforce.
3. Create a culture that promotes getting the COVID-19 vaccine as a part of being healthy.

Provide Information and Resources

You can help promote vaccination by providing timely, accurate information in all of the languages commonly spoken by your employees. The following resources and talking points can help you spread the word about the safety and benefits of getting vaccinated against COVID-19.

1. Emphasize the immediate benefits of getting vaccinated within the work space and beyond.
 - Getting vaccinated will help keep you, your family, and your community healthy and safe.
 - The vaccines are safe and are extraordinarily effective at protecting you from COVID-19.
 - Vaccines are an essential tool to help us move past this pandemic.
 - By getting vaccinated, you can help our economy get back on its feet faster, and prevent further spread of the virus resulting in less COVID-19-related illnesses and deaths.
2. Promote vaccine safety.
 - CDC's poster "[Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines](#)" is a basic explanation of vaccine safety for general workplace use.
 - DHS [partner resources](#):
 - [Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
 - [COVID-19 Vaccine Safety](#)
 - [How Our Bodies Respond to the COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
 - [How are COVID-19 Vaccines Authorized](#)
 - [COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
 - [Available COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
 - More detailed and higher literacy level resource information on safety questions:
 - Safety questions including reproductive health concerns are available at the [Children's Hospital of Philadelphia \(CHOP\) webpage](#).
 - Vaccine myths are dealt with effectively in a fact sheet from the [Los Angeles Department of Public Health](#).
3. Share where to get the vaccine.
 - Up to date information is on the [DHS COVID-19 Vaccine website](#).



- Let employees know if there will be an opportunity to get vaccinated at the workplace.
- Consider displaying posters with Wisconsin branding and multiple languages.
 - “You are essential” or “Protect against COVID-19” [posters](#) for many different occupations, that you can add your logo to.
 - [Fotonovella](#) (graphic story in English or Spanish) comic book-like story poster of a worker’s decision to get vaccinated.
 - [CDC poster](#) that emphasizes the importance of continuing protective measures.

More detailed guidance on how to encourage vaccination among employees can be found in the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation resource: [Wisconsin Vaccine Guidance for All Businesses; Ways to Encourage Vaccination.](#)

DHS also offers a “train the trainer” presentation, in which a presentation is tailored to your specific organization, and training is offered to better equip you and your leadership team in talking about vaccine confidence and vaccine in general with your employees. For more information, [email the DHS vaccine team.](#)

Additional resources are provided in Appendix One: Additional Information and Resources for Employers.



Selecting the Best Vaccination Options for Employees

There are a number of ways employers can facilitate or promote vaccination. Here are four options for employers to connect their staff with vaccine providers:

- Hold an on-site (in the workplace) vaccination clinic with an approved vaccine provider.
- Hold an off-site (in the community) vaccination clinic with an approved vaccine provider.
- If already providing on-site medical services, become an approved vaccinator.
- Leverage existing local options and provide resources to your employees about other vaccine providers in your community.

Every community is different. Not all options will be feasible for every employer given the different access options for vaccine across the state.

On-Site Vaccination Clinic

Employers should consider on-site vaccination options if the organization has:

- A large percentage of staff who are uninsured or belong to a marginalized population (racial or ethnic minority group, immigrant status, English as a second language, disability status, economically disadvantaged, etc.).
- A large percentage of staff who are unable to physically distance, or come into frequent contact with the public throughout the day.
- A large percentage of staff on-site with predictable schedules.
- A large percentage of staff who would otherwise be unable to easily access vaccination in their area. Such as few providers are offering vaccination, current vaccination clinic hours interfere with work time, travel time is too great (more than 60-minute driving time rural, 30-minute driving time urban, etc.).
- Ability to coordinate with a local approved vaccine provider to schedule a closed vaccination clinic for employees.
- A location with enough space to stand up a vaccination clinic while maintaining ADA compliant practices and social distancing through the entire process, from screening to post-vaccination observation.

On-site vaccination options might include employer-run vaccination clinics in partnership with an approved vaccine provider, or mobile vaccination clinics run by third-party vaccine providers brought to the workplace. In both cases, the employer provides the space, the approved vaccinator supplies the vaccine, staff, and medical equipment, and logistics and operational details are decided in partnership between the vaccine provider and employer.

Employers evaluating on-site options should consider contracting or partnering with the following approved vaccine providers:

- Pharmacies
- Health care providers
- Local health departments
- Commercial vaccinators

Employers who regularly offer flu shots on-site to their employees should consider contacting their flu shot provider first.



Details on how to request an on-site employer-based clinic can be found in the subsequent section; *How to Request and Plan an Employer-Based Vaccination Clinic.*

Off-Site Vaccination Clinic with an Approved Vaccinator

An employer should consider an off-site employer-organized vaccination option in collaboration with an approved vaccine provider if the organization has:

- A small or medium-sized workforce and does not have the resources or space to host a vaccination clinic on-site.
- The ability to partner with a local community-based vaccination clinic to hold an off-site ‘employee vaccination day’ on a designated date/time(s).

Employers should consider the following vaccinators in their communities as potential vaccine provider partners for off-site clinics:

- Pharmacies
- Health care providers
- Local health departments
- Commercial vaccinators
- Community-based vaccination clinics (CBVC)
 - State-sponsored sites (in partnership with DHS contractor AMI)
 - Federally-sponsored sites (for example, FEMA, Dept. of Defense)
 - Locally-sponsored sites
- Community organizations through mobile vaccine teams.

Details on how to request an off-site employer-based clinic can be found in the subsequent section, *How to Request and Plan an Employer-Based Vaccination Clinic.*

Non-Employer-Based Vaccination Options

An employer should consider sharing information with staff about vaccination options in the community rather than organize employer-based options if the organization has:

- A small or medium-sized workforce (without the ability to combine with other employers) that does not have the resources to host a vaccination clinic.
- A mobile worker population that frequently moves from one job site to the next.
- A workforce with highly variable schedules.
- An employer with a majority of workers who would prefer vaccination in a community clinic rather than an employer-run clinic.

Resources employers can use to direct employees to vaccination options in the community include:

- Wisconsin vaccine provider map: The vaccine provider map is designed to show all eligible vaccine provider locations and information on a user-friendly map so the public can more easily find vaccinator information in their area. All vaccinators are included in the map with their associated website and registration link. Employees can access the vaccine provider map at [COVID-19: Map of Vaccine Providers.](#)
- DHS hotline: Available at 1-844-684-1064 to answer vaccine questions and help with registration for those who do not have access to internet or prefer to access information through non-digital communications.



- [Vaccine Finder](#): Online CDC map that helps people find the latest information on COVID-19 vaccine availability. In Wisconsin, pharmacy vaccine providers are currently displaying, with additional locations to be added.
- Wisconsin COVID-19 Vaccine Registry: Allows Wisconsin residents to register for and schedule COVID-19 vaccination appointments locally and as vaccine becomes available. Those who are not unable to get an appointment are placed on a wait list. The vaccine registry will be used by those vaccine providers who opt in and is not a comprehensive resource for all vaccination options. Employees can access the vaccine registry at <https://vaccinate.wi.gov>.

As vaccine supply does not meet demand, it is possible that vaccine providers may continue to prioritize individuals based on [priority order of eligible groups as defined by DHS](#). Individuals may be asked to sign an attestation form, stating they are part of a specific eligible group. An example of this form can be found in Appendix Three: Vaccination Attestation Form.



How to Request and Plan an Employer-Based Vaccination Clinic

Wisconsin employers who are considering hosting a COVID-19 vaccination clinic in coordination with an approved vaccine provider should note the following considerations:

- Only vaccine providers enrolled in the Wisconsin COVID-19 Vaccine Program can administer COVID-19 vaccine.
- Vaccine providers will request vaccine for on or off-site clinics on behalf of the employer partnership through the DHS bi-weekly allocation survey for employer-based clinics.
- Vaccine providers can charge the employer for the staff time necessary to complete the clinic.
- Vaccine providers and employers **cannot** charge the employee for the vaccine or resources needed to become vaccinated, such as staff time and supplies.
- Clinic plans should be communicated with the local and tribal health department (LTHD) to ensure visibility of vaccination activities in their community.
- All communities are different. This option is not feasible in some communities.

Steps to prepare for and request an employer-based clinic include:

1. Survey your workforce to determine the number of employees who want to receive the COVID-19 vaccine through an employer-based clinic. Some employees may have received their vaccine elsewhere, may not want to be vaccinated at a work-based clinic, or may not be interested in getting the vaccine at this point.
Do not ask for any specific personal health information in your survey.
2. Identify an approved vaccine provider to partner with. This could be a pharmacy, health care provider, LTHD, etc.
3. Identify target date(s) for a first-dose vaccination clinic and second dose if applicable, allowing ample time for the vaccinator to request vaccine from DHS.
 - If the vaccination clinic is allocated a two-dose vaccine, plan to have three appropriately spaced clinic days, and if allocated a one-dose vaccine, plan to have two clinic days.
 - The additional vaccination day supports individuals who are hesitant at the first clinic and want to “wait and see” what happens with colleagues, so they have an opportunity to come to the second clinic and have ample opportunity to get the full number of doses (i.e., if more than one dose is required).
 - Multiple dates also allow for staggering staff in anticipation of some experiencing side effects and possibly being out after vaccination. Most employees will not miss work, but this scheduling technique helps ensure continuity of operations.
4. Work with the vaccine provider to identify what they need for a successful and efficient clinic, including ensuring they have the proper list of employees.
5. Engage your human resources department. They can help guide you if you need to prioritize employees in the event there is not enough vaccine for all employees. Use current [DHS guidance](#) to help make these decisions.
6. Ensure employees are informed about:
 - Vaccine safety and effectiveness
 - Preparing for potential side effects from the vaccine
 - Who the vaccinators are



- Any incentives being provided (such as being paid for the time it takes to attend the clinic, paid leave to recover from side effects, any other modest tokens of appreciation)
 - That they will not be billed or otherwise charged for getting vaccinated
 - Their confidentiality and private health information will be protected
 - Participation is encouraged but ultimately voluntary
7. Inform your [LTHD](#) of your plans. Although LTHDs are not usually the vaccine provider for employer-based clinics, a line of communication is strongly encouraged, so they are aware of vaccination activities in their communities.

Once you collect the information above, your vaccine provider can request vaccine from DHS. Vaccine providers may either submit a request for vaccine through the regular allocation survey, or through a separate employer-based clinic allocation process in which the intent is (if approved) to provide the entire amount of vaccine requested.

The Wisconsin COVID-19 Vaccine Program will review the vaccine provider's employer-based clinics' allocation request separately. Requests will be reviewed and prioritized based upon a number of factors, including local vaccine administration rates and socio-economic, demographic, and geographic equity criteria. Due to limited vaccine supply, not all requestors (vaccine providers) will be able to receive an allocation for the week requested. If a request is not approved, it will be held for consideration in subsequent weeks. Yet, as needs or circumstances may change, vaccine providers are encouraged to re-submit their request in subsequent allocation surveys as well. Patience and flexibility will be a key factor in planning and preparing for an employer-based vaccination clinic.

For a detailed checklist of the steps to consider and prepare see Appendix Four: Planning an Employer-Based COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic Checklist.

Other Considerations

Regardless of how an employer chooses to support their employees getting a COVID-19 vaccine, regular and clear communication is critical. Employers can provide accurate information to their workforce to help build trust in the processes and vaccine. They can also help support vaccination efforts by ensuring employees know how and where they can sign up to receive vaccine, whether in the community or through a workplace clinic. Employers can additionally support vaccine uptake by providing (and clearly communicating to staff about) paid time off to get the vaccine or recover from any side effects. In addition, clear and consistent communication can protect employees from falling victim to a vaccine phishing scam attack, thus protecting the company.

As vaccine supply does not yet meet demand, it is possible that vaccine providers may continue to prioritize individuals based on [priority order of eligible groups as defined by DHS](#). Employers who do not plan to host a workplace clinic, can prepare staff with proof of employment that they can show at off-site vaccination clinics. Examples include an employee badge or employer letter outlining their eligibility (example in Appendix Four: Employment-Based Eligibility Letter).

You can keep your employees safe and healthy by continuing to encourage employees to follow public health practices to help stop the spread of the virus:

- Wear a mask over your nose and mouth
- Stay at least 6 feet way from others, to the extent possible
- Wash your hands often
- Work remotely if feasible



Employers with any vaccination questions can email dhscovidvaccinator@wi.gov.

To stay up-to-date with COVID-19 vaccine information, eligibility, frequently asked questions, and more please visit www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine.htm.

To find which LTHD serves your community, visit www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/lh-depts/counties.htm.



Appendices

Appendix One: Additional Information and Resources for Employers

DHS and other COVID-19 vaccine resources:

- [Employer fact sheet](#)
- Employer COVID-19 Vaccine Framework Presentation
Tailored PowerPoint presentation with which the employer can both learn and provide important vaccine information to their employees. Additional training to help prepare employers in talking about COVID-19 is also available. For access to the PowerPoint with or without additional training, email dhscovidvaccinator@wi.gov.
- [Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation resource: Wisconsin Vaccine Guidance for All Businesses; Ways to Encourage Vaccination](#)
- [Healthy MKE COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit for Employers](#)
- [CDC FAQs booklet for employees](#)
- [CDC FAQs for employers](#)
- [CDC basic talking points \(key things to know\)](#)
- [CDC Essential Employees Toolkit](#)
- [CDC vaccine mandate web page](#)
- [U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission article](#)



Appendix Two: Planning an Employer-Based COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic Checklist

Planning an Employer-Based COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic Checklist Essential Planning Components

This document has been developed to provide guidance for employers who are interested in establishing, or hosting, an on-site employee vaccination clinic for COVID-19 vaccine. This document details several considerations that DHS recommends be integrated into clinic operations in order to host a clinic that promotes accessibility, equity, and safety for participants.

Considerations for Building an On-Site, Closed, Employer-Based Clinic

An on-site, closed, employer-based clinic is that which is privately hosted by an employer, business, provider, or LTHD, which is called the 'host.' Attendance is restricted only to a dedicated population of individuals such as employees or members associated with the host.

Demographics of Event

- Identify number of employees/participants to be vaccinated.
- Determine if contractors and temporary staff will be invited to participate in the clinic.
- Identify appropriate location for the clinic.
- Schedule date(s) and time(s) of the clinic appropriate to reach employees, accommodating differing work schedules and other accessibility issues (for example, child care, shift work, no paid leave time).
- Locations should be able to handle the volume of traffic anticipated for the clinic target size.
- The clinic site should be able to accommodate an employee's accessibility needs.
- The clinic site should be ADA compliant.
- All locations should protect clinic staff and employees from inclement weather as feasible, including fans in the summer, heaters in the winter, and shelter from precipitation in all seasons. Weather accommodations should ensure physical/social distancing could be maintained at all times. Reference and follow tornado warning, fire evacuation, and security protocols.

Event Enrollment and Staffing

- Establish a partnership(s) with an approved vaccine provider.
- Verify selected vaccine provider(s) will provide medical authority to support clinical oversight of vaccine administration and clinical staff at the clinic.
- Verify the vaccine provider has ample time to request vaccine through the bi-weekly survey.
- Communicate the vaccination plan with the [local and tribal health department](#).
- Identify an on-site 'host' point of contact to respond to questions and handle partnership needs. Identify a backup that is familiar with all on-site activities and processes.
- Identify who will be responsible for handling and oversight of:
 - Promoting employee flow with proper distancing
 - All for one-way flow through clinic space
 - Allow for ample observation area monitoring
 - Accommodate registering and scheduling of employees for the clinic
 - Prepare to manage medical emergency related to the administration of vaccines. Ensure the statewide 911 system and emergency medical service (EMS) information is located at the vaccination site and there is adequate cell phone coverage or ready access to a landline.



Registration

- Work with vaccine provider partner to develop and publish FAQs and key information details needed for participants being vaccinated. Include details regarding scheduling (appointment or walk-up), how to arrive at the clinic location, PPE and social distancing expectations, what to wear (layers for access to injection site), and screening expectations.
- Verify with vaccine provider that all printed forms will be in plain language and available in various languages that are appropriate for employee population.
- If needed, plan for language interpreters.

Site Design and Protocols

- Design clinic layout that promotes one-way traffic with limited queuing, while ensuring physical distancing.
- Ensure clinic layout is supportive for patients with disabilities or limited mobility. This includes adequate spacing in walkways, available seating, and spacing for wheelchairs.
- Establish a clinic layout that incorporates the following stations:
 - Greetings/triage
 - Registration
 - Education
 - Screening
 - Vaccination
 - Observation
 - Closed-observation (away from other employee observation area)
 - Data-entry for the Wisconsin Immunization Registry (if needed by vaccine provider)
 - Exit
 - Patient de-escalation
 - Vaccine preparation
- Use visuals to support clinic flow and social distancing including standing circles on the floor. Incorporate rope or cones, tape, and signs in multiple languages, as needed inside the clinic to show routes for employees to follow from station to station.
- Vaccination stations should be at least 6 feet apart, equipped with barriers, and clinic flow should be one way and allow maintenance of 6 feet between individuals whenever possible, including in all waiting areas.
- Provide visual barriers and screens between stations for privacy.
- Provide adequate seating for employees in waiting areas.
- Provide a private area where employees who experience acute adverse events after vaccination or who have medical problems can be evaluated and treated.
- Provide a protected, secure area for clinic staff to leave personal items and take breaks (if needed by vaccine provider).
- Determine who will secure sufficient supplies to maintain infection control and proper cleaning of entire clinic location.
- Provide ample access to hand sanitizer and PPE for vaccine clinic employees.
- Determine who will be responsible for creating a 'just-in-time' or standby call list to prevent vaccine waste of end-of-day excess doses.
- Determine who will be responsible for on-site storage needs to maintain appropriate temperatures as well as security while vaccine is stored throughout the clinic day.



Staff Positions and Responsibilities

The following staff positions, in addition to those that will be provided by the vaccine provider partner, are recommended to be specifically created to aid in the success of the vaccination clinic. The specific need for these positions, and whether the employer will need to provide staffing of these position will vary according to the size of the vaccination event and the partnership entered into to provide the vaccinations. Some roles may be able to be combined according to the site's needs.

The fact that a person has received a COVID-19 vaccination, including all details regarding that vaccination, is protected health information and must be kept private by law. Please work with your vaccine provider and your HR department to ensure the confidentiality of this information.

Greeter and Employee Triage

- Greet patients (employees) and provide assistance with directing employees to clinic.
- Direct traffic flow by limiting number who are allowed to enter.
- Provide initial symptom screening such as temperature checks and ensuring patients are wearing PPE.
- Monitor traffic flow and directs patients to registration station.
- Cleanse and disinfect vaccination stations at a minimum every hour, between shifts and if station areas become visibly soiled.

Registration (Handled by vaccine provider)

- Identify patient as employees who are able to receive COVID vaccine at the clinic.
- Verify Vaccination Administration Record is complete. If not, direct to area designated for completion.
- Monitor traffic flow and direct to Screening or Waiting Area check-in.
- Direct patients in Waiting Area to progress to Screening
- Cleanse and disinfect vaccination stations at a minimum every hour, between shifts and if station areas become visibly soiled.

Observation Station and Waiting Area (Handled by vaccine provider)

- Review observation protocols with patients. Instruct patients to report adverse reactions immediately to clinic staff.
- If necessary, communicate booster vaccination appointment before instructing patients to wait in observation area.
- Observe patient for initial vaccine reactions. CDC currently recommends that persons without contraindications to vaccination who receive an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine be observed after vaccination for the following time periods:
 - 30 minutes:
 - Patients with a history of an immediate allergic reaction of any severity to another (non-mRNA COVID-19) vaccine or injectable therapy.
 - Persons with a history of anaphylaxis due to any cause.
 - 15 minutes: All other patients
- Patients may be observed for longer based on clinical concerns. For example, if a person develops itching and swelling confined to the injection site during their post-vaccination observation period, this period may be extended to assess for development of any hypersensitivity signs or symptoms consistent with anaphylaxis.
- Monitor traffic flow and direct patients to clinic exit.



- Cleanse and disinfect vaccination stations at a minimum every hour, between shifts and if station areas become visibly soiled.

Data Entry Station (Handled by vaccine provider)

All vaccination data entry should be handled by the vaccine provider partner only. Staff of the employer partners should not view or handle vaccination information of any kind.

- Document each vaccine into the Wisconsin Immunization Registry (WIR).
- If privacy can be maintained, this role can be combined with the observation station.
- Ensure HIPAA compliance with administration data entered into WIR.
- Monitor traffic flow and direct patients to clinic exit.
- Cleanse and disinfect vaccination stations at a minimum every hour, between shifts and if station areas become visibly soiled.



Appendix Three: Vaccination Attestation Form

As vaccine remains scarce, it is possible that vaccine providers and employers may continue to prioritize individuals based on priority order of eligible groups as defined by DHS.

The full list of eligible groups in priority order can be reviewed at:

www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-about.htm.

Therefore, individuals vaccinated in community settings may be asked to sign an attestation form, stating they are part of an eligible group that is being prioritized. Employers holding an on-site clinic should determine eligibility prioritization prior and should not require employees to sign an attestation form.

When prioritizing employees according to medical conditions, employers cannot ask workers to disclose such conditions.

COVID-19 VACCINATION ATTESTATION

In signing this form, I attest that, to the best of my ability, I have reviewed and believe that I belong to one of the groups currently eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, as detailed at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/vaccine-about.htm.

First Name	Last Name
Signature	Date Signed



Appendix Four: Employment-Based Eligibility Letter

[Company Letterhead]

Date:

From: [Company name]

[Company address]

To whom it may concern:

_____ is employed by [Company name], whose function falls within [insert category of eligibility, ex. Public Facing Essential Works; Public Transit] as defined by the [Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#). As such, this employee is currently eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine.

Please direct any questions to [name] at [contact information].

Sincerely,

[Company representative]