



**DCFS Resource Parent/Caregiver  
COVID-19 Vaccination FAQ  
2/19/2021**

**1. Should I get the vaccine if I have allergies or health problems?**

It depends. People who are allergic to things like food, pets, venom or pollen, or people who have a family history of allergies, can be vaccinated. However, people who have had an allergic reaction to any ingredient in the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines or to polysorbate should not get vaccinated. People who are allergic to a vaccine or injectable therapy for another disease, should talk to their doctor to decide if it is safe for them to get vaccinated. Information about allergic reactions may change. Be sure to check the latest guidance on the CDC COVID-19 Vaccines and Allergic Reactions webpage and talk to your doctor.

**2. Am I required to get the vaccine?** No. It is voluntary to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, but highly recommended because vaccines boost your immune system, so it will be ready to fight the virus, if you are exposed.

**3. Is Personal Protective Equipment required after getting vaccinated?** Yes, absolutely. It is important to continue to take precautions like washing hands, wearing face coverings and practicing physical distancing, even after you have had two doses of vaccine. This is because:

- The vaccine is 95 percent effective at preventing COVID-19 illness. This is a really high level of protection for a vaccine, but it still means that 1 in 20 people who get the vaccine will not be protected.
- We don't know how well the vaccine stops the actual virus from being spread. Getting the vaccine stops the disease from making you feel sick, but you might still be able to spread it to others.
- It takes up to two weeks after the last dose to get the best protection.

If you get COVID-19 after you have been vaccinated, you still need to isolate. And, if you have been in close contact with someone with COVID, you need to quarantine even if you have been vaccinated.

**4. Do I have to pay for the vaccine?** No. Your insurance will cover the vaccination fee, and public funds cover the cost if you do not have insurance.

**5. If I've had COVID or tested positive, do I still need to get the vaccine?** Yes. You are likely protected for 90 days after COVID-19, but you may receive the vaccine as soon as you recover from COVID-19 illness in order to provide longer lasting protection.



6. **Am I exempt from quarantine after out of state travel if I had COVID in the last 90 days or am vaccinated?**  
No. Unless travel is for work, anyone returning from out of state must quarantine for 10 days.
7. **Are you going to require that all caregivers get vaccinated?**  
No. However, it is highly recommended that everyone eligible for the vaccine be vaccinated to prevent the spread of the virus. DCFS encourages resource parents to give careful consideration to receiving the COVID-19 vaccine for their protection and the protection of others.
8. **The children in my home have unmonitored birth parent visits – how can we find out if the birth parents got the vaccine?** Immunization records are confidential health information and DCFS is not legally able to compel parents, employees, or others to tell us whether they've received the vaccine. During monitored visits, continue to take precautions like washing hands, wearing face coverings and practicing physical distancing to protect yourself and other.
9. **What happens if I am vaccinated and I take in a youth who has COVID or has been exposed to COVID? Am I safe?** You are likely to receive high-level protection from severe COVID-19 infection 14 days after your second vaccine. However, some people are not fully protected and so you will need to continue to use Personal Protective Equipment to minimize your chance of exposure/infection.
10. **Will I still be able to care for kids if I refuse to take the vaccine?** Yes. DCFS encourages resource parents to give careful consideration to receiving the COVID-19 vaccine for their protection and the protection of others, but the vaccination is not required.
11. **Will you take away my grandchild if I don't want to take the vaccine?** Absolutely not. The ultimate objective at DCFS is to ensure that children remain in a supportive environment with loving resource parents and caregivers.
12. **What happens if I take the first dose but they run out of the second dose and I don't receive it timely?** Vaccine production is being increased to avoid this, but in the event that you can't get the second dose, there is significant protection after one dose. You may also receive the second dose up to six weeks after the first, or even later if you have reason to delay, and it will still provide significant protection.
13. **Will there be a special vaccine center for caregivers? When will it be ready?** DCFS is advocating on your behalf to ensure that, if you want the vaccine, you will have access to it. We are working closely with the Department of Public Health in an effort to set up a special COVID-19 vaccine center for caregivers. However, this is still in the works and we do not currently have a specific date or location.



14. **Can caregivers ask social workers if they have been vaccinated before letting them into their home?** Immunization history is confidential health information, and no one (not even DCFS as the employer) is legally able to compel a worker to share vaccination or other health information. To minimize the spread of the virus, DCFS social workers must complete a screening tool to assess their well-being before visiting families, and wear a mask and maintain their social distance during visits.
15. **Do caregivers have higher priority than the general public?** DCFS believes that child care providers should have priority and is advocating for access to vaccination for this group. The Department of Public Health outlines the current priority tiers on their website.
16. **Why do social workers have higher priority than caregivers?** Licensed healthcare providers are in the first tier, and social workers are licensed to provide behavioral health services. This makes many of our DCFS social workers eligible for the vaccine.
17. **Which lasts longer, immunity after getting COVID-19 or protection from COVID-19 vaccines?** We don't know for sure but current evidence suggests that COVID-19 disease protects you for 90 plus days and that the vaccine protects for more than 4-6 months (probably closer to one year like the flu vaccine).
18. **What percentage of the population needs to get vaccinated to have herd immunity to COVID-19?** It's not yet known.
19. **I read that my DNA can be altered from the Vaccine. Is this True?** No. The vaccine does not alter DNA. The vaccine includes a messenger RNA that enters cells, but not into the nucleus where the DNA is located. The messenger RNA causes the cell to make the protein that causes antibody production. As soon as the messenger RNA does this, it is broken down without having any effect on DNA.
20. **When will it be my turn to get a COVID-19 vaccine?** The Department of Public Health outlines the tiers on their website.
21. **What can I do now to help protect myself from getting COVID-19 until I am able to get a vaccine?** Use Personal Protective Equipment, wear a mask, wash your hands, practice social distancing, and do not gather with people outside your household.
22. **If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine?** Yes. You are likely protected for 90 days after COVID-19, but you may receive the vaccine as soon as you recover from COVID-19 illness in order to provide longer lasting protection.





23. **Do I need to wear a mask and avoid close contact with others if I have gotten 2 doses of the vaccine?** Yes. You are likely to receive high-level protection from severe COVID-19 infection 14 days after your second vaccine. However, some people are not fully protected and so you will need to continue to use Personal Protective Equipment to minimize your chance of exposure/infection.
24. **How many shots of COVID-19 vaccine will be needed?** Two vaccines are allowed in the United States so far. They are made by the companies, Pfizer and Moderna. Both are given in two doses a few weeks apart. It is important to get the same kind of vaccine for both doses. The Pfizer vaccine is given 21 days apart and the Moderna vaccine is given 28 days apart.
25. **Can I get a COVID-19 vaccine at the same time as another vaccine?** No. You need to wait 14 days after a non-COVID vaccine before getting the COVID-19 vaccine. You should also avoid getting any other vaccines in between your COVID-19 vaccine doses.
26. **When will COVID-19 vaccines be widely available in the United States?** The goal is for everyone to be able to get a COVID-19 vaccination in the next 6-12 months.
27. **What is being done to distribute COVID-19 vaccines?** State and local agencies are partnering with manufacturers to increase production and distribution.
28. **Are COVID-19 vaccines safe?** Yes. All vaccines have side effects, and the data for COVID-19 vaccines suggests that there are no new or common side effects compared with other vaccines. About 1/3 of people have mild flu like symptoms (muscle pain, low grade fevers) and many have arm pain after the vaccine. For some people, the second vaccine is associated with more of these mild symptoms. These are not dangerous, but they are an indication that your body is developing an immune response.
29. **Is it safe for me to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I am pregnant or breastfeeding?** Yes, but you may want to consult with your health care provider if you have questions.
30. **Is it safe for me to get a vaccine if I have an underlying medical condition?** Yes, but you may want to ask your health care provider if you have questions.
31. **Is there a risk of a severe allergic reaction if I receive the vaccine?** Very rare. Less than 1 in 100,000.



- 32. How do I report it if I have a problem or bad reaction after getting a COVID-19 vaccine?**  
Great question. There is a reporting system called the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) that tracks reactions to all vaccines. You may self-report or your health care provider or vaccine site may assist you. Anyone who has a reaction following the vaccine is immediately reported by the vaccine site.
- 33. Can caregivers request no face-to-face visits if there are concerns of COVID-19 from the biological family and social workers?** Please consult with your assigned social worker.
- 34. Can adult dependents in the care of the resource family get authorization in order to receive the vaccine?** Currently only those who are licensed health care providers or over age 65 are eligible to receive the vaccine.
- 35. What are the differences between the antibodies that we have from actually having had the virus, and the antibodies that we get from the vaccine?** There is a diversity in the immune response from natural infection, likely due to differences in the amount of virus to which the person was exposed. Some may have stronger immune response than others. With a vaccine, we know the dose that is being administered, and we know that that dose is effective at eliciting an immune response.
- 36. Are there any studies that have been done on fertility and the possible long-term effects?**  
Please see link and summary from the American Society of Reproductive Medicine:
- “Because COVID-19 mRNA vaccines are not composed of live virus, they are not thought to cause an increased risk of infertility, first or second trimester loss, stillbirth, or congenital anomalies.” This does not indicate there have been any long term studies on fertility following COVID-19 vaccine.

<https://www.asrm.org/globalassets/asrm/asrm-content/news-and-publications/covid-19/covidtaskforceupdate11.pdf>

For additional information, please visit the links below.

[DPH FAQ](#) and [CDC FAQ](#)