

Eligibility of Educators, School Staff, and Child Care Workers for COVID-19 Vaccination

March 4, 2021

On March 2, 2021, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued a [Secretarial Directive](#) ordering COVID-19 vaccine providers to make eligible and administer vaccines to “workers at pre-primary, primary, and secondary schools, Head Start and Early Head Start programs, including teachers, staff, and bus drivers and those who work as or for licensed child care providers, including center-based and family care providers.” Nationwide, this eligibility is effective immediately. Maine has aligned its vaccination plan with this new requirement.

All organizations with provider agreements with the Maine Immunization Program must add this eligibility group to the current two eligibility groups: (1) Maine residents in “Phase 1a” (patient and public facing health care and public safety personnel, long-term care residents and staff, and COVID-19 critical infrastructure personnel) and (2) age-eligible Maine residents: individuals age 60 and older at this time. Providers should not prioritize vaccinating educators, school staff, and child care providers over other eligible individuals with one exception: the Federal government [requires](#) “all enrolled retail pharmacy providers to set aside all currently un-booked vaccination slots for the exclusive use of teachers, school staff, and child care workers through March 31, 2021. Slots that remain un-booked 48 hours prior to the appointment may be released to others.” In Maine, those pharmacies include certain Hannaford, Walgreens, and Walmart / Sam’s Club locations. These pharmacies receive vaccine directly from the Federal government over and above what Maine receives for distribution. Aside from these retail pharmacies, Maine vaccination sites should incorporate educators, school staff, and child care workers into their workflow when scheduling appointments for COVID-19 vaccination.

DHHS and the Maine CDC are proceeding with existing plans to provide one-time school vaccination clinics for teachers and school staff who are aged 60 and older. Organizations that have offered their time and resources for this effort should continue to plan for these clinics, most of which will be held on March 12th through March 14th. These clinics are limited to PK-12 teachers and school staff who are 60 years of age and older. Providers will ask for proof of age as well as employment and residency at registration.

In light of Maine’s limited allotment, Maine will not allocate additional doses to vaccination sites for educators, school staff and child care workers. The expectation is that weekly allocations will be used to vaccinate individuals that are age eligible, eligible under Phase 1a, or in this new eligibility group equally. Special clinics limited to this eligibility group may be organized by the retail pharmacy providers but not by other sites except for the age-limited clinics for school staff over 60 years described earlier. Organizations can begin to vaccinate any individual in this newly broadened eligible group immediately.

Vaccine recipients should bring proof of both State of Maine residency and eligibility for vaccination. Proof of state residency includes, for example, a Maine-issued driver’s license or state identification card; a bill or other piece of mail that includes the person’s name and Maine address; an EBT, MaineCare, or shelter ID card; other document that can confirm name, age and

address; or, in the case of individuals entering the state for a job, a letter or statement from their employer verifying their employment in Maine. Proof of employment for PK-12 school educators and staff can include an employee ID card, a paystub, or a letter from the employer. For licensed child care providers, proof of employment will be a certificate from the child care registry system. Specific information regarding the verification of employment for licensed child care will be made available to those providers directly. Maine has aligned the state's vaccination plan with President Biden's recent policy to prioritize pre-K-12 school staff and childcare providers, regardless of age; therefore, age verification, except for at the special clinics described earlier, is not required for educators, school staff, and child care workers.