



December 14, 2020

To: All Pharmacies, Pharmacists, Pharmacy Interns and Pharmacy Technicians Licensed in the State of Maine

Re: Updated Guidance Concerning Vaccination Under the Public Health Emergency from the Commissioners of the Maine Departments of Health and Human Services & Professional and Financial Regulation

On November 23, 2020, the Commissioners of the Maine Departments of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Professional and Financial Regulation (DPFR) provided [guidance](#) regarding the Federal policy concerning vaccination under the public health emergency and implementation of that policy in Maine. This document updates that guidance to provide **UPDATED** information concerning training for licensed pharmacists, licensed pharmacy interns, and licensed pharmacy technicians acting pursuant to that Federal policy. **The November 23, 2020 guidance otherwise remains unchanged.**

On August 19, 2020, and updated on August 24, 2020, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued the [Third Amendment to the Declaration under the Public Readiness and Emergency Preparedness Act \(PREP Act\)](#) to increase access to lifesaving childhood vaccines and decrease the risk of vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks. Per the [HHS press release](#): “Today’s action means easier access to lifesaving vaccines for our children, as we seek to ensure immunization rates remain high during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said HHS Secretary Alex Azar. “The amendment authorizes State-licensed pharmacists (and pharmacy interns acting under their supervision to administer vaccines, if the pharmacy intern is licensed or registered by his or her State board of pharmacy) to order and administer vaccines to individuals ages three through 18 years, subject to several requirements outlined in the amendment.” Additional [guidance](#), dated September 3, 2020, under the PREP Act from HHS was announced on [September 9, 2020](#), in regards to administration of the COVID-19 vaccine by pharmacists. On October 20, 2020, HHS issued additional [guidance](#) that expanded the authorization to administer vaccines to include “qualified pharmacy technicians” acting under supervision of a qualified pharmacist and in compliance with the Federal requirements.

On December 9, 2020, the Secretary of HHS issued [the Fourth Amendment to the Declaration under the PREP Act](#) “modifying and clarifying what CPR and other training is required for certain pharmacists, pharmacy interns, and pharmacy technicians to order or administer childhood or COVID-19 vaccines pursuant to the PREP Act declaration,” per the [HHS press release](#).

The Commissioners of DHHS and DPFR are providing this updated guidance for two reasons: (1) to reflect these changes to Federal policy concerning training and (2) to incorporate the position of the Maine Board of Pharmacy concerning the training requirement for pharmacy technicians acting pursuant to the Federal policy. All licensees are reminded that the Federal policy, including training requirements, is evolving in light of the emergency circumstances and is likely to continue to do so. In particular, training courses that are offered or are being developed may or may not address the topics,

or be approved in the manner, required under the Federal policy and Maine's implementation of that policy. Licensees should confirm that any training satisfies these standards.

Updated Federal Requirements per the Fourth Amendment: The key training updates to the Federal policy are the following:

- The licensed pharmacist must have completed the immunization training that the licensing State requires in order for pharmacists to order and administer vaccines. If the State does not specify training requirements for the licensed pharmacist to order and administer vaccines, the licensed pharmacist must complete a vaccination training program of at least 20 hours that is approved by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE). Such a training program must include hands-on injection technique, clinical evaluation of indications and contraindications of vaccines, and the recognition and treatment of emergency reactions to vaccines.
- The licensed pharmacist, State-authorized pharmacy intern, and qualified pharmacy technician must have a current certificate in basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation. This requirement is satisfied by, among other things, a certification in basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation by an online program that has received accreditation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center, the ACPE, or the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education.

Updated Maine DHHS and DPFR Commissioner Guidance on Implementation of Federal Policy:

- Pharmacists ordering or administering vaccines must have completed the [immunization training](#) required under Maine law and must also otherwise comply with statutorily required certification and training requirements approved by the Maine Board of Pharmacy.
- A pharmacy intern administering vaccines must register with the Maine Board of Pharmacy. The pharmacy intern registrant must submit evidence of the following:
 - a. Valid unrestricted license in Maine.
 - b. Completion of a practical training program of at least 20 hours that is approved by the ACPE. This training program must include hands-on injection technique, clinical evaluation of indications and contraindications of vaccines, and the recognition, treatment of emergency reactions to vaccines, and life support training.
 - c. Evidence of a current cardiovascular life support certification accepted by the American Heart Association, the American Red Cross or other similar training organizations. This requirement is satisfied by, among other things, a certification in basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation by an online program that has received accreditation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center, the ACPE, or the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education.
- A pharmacy technician administering vaccines must register with the Maine Board of Pharmacy. The pharmacy technician registrant must submit evidence of the following:
 - a. Valid unrestricted license in Maine.
 - b. Completion of a practical training program of at least 6 hours that is approved by the ACPE. This training program must include hands-on injection technique and the recognition and

- treatment of emergency reactions to vaccines. A pharmacy technician may elect to instead complete the 20-hour pharmacy intern training detailed above.
- c. Evidence of a current cardiovascular life support certification accepted by the American Heart Association, the American Red Cross or other similar training organizations. This requirement is satisfied by, among other things, a certification in basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation by an online program that has received accreditation from the American Nurses Credentialing Center, the ACPE, or the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education.

Contact information:

Maine Immunization Program at:

Main Line: (207) 287-3746

ImmPact Helpdesk: (207) 287-3006 / Support/Education: (207) 287-9972

www.ImmunizeME.org

For COVID vaccine related questions, contact the Maine Immunization Program at C19Vaccine.MECDC@maine.gov

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