

Employer Workforce COVID-19 Vaccinations

Information and Resources for Massachusetts Employers

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We all know how important the COVID-19 vaccination is to help stop the pandemic, yet availability is currently limited. Frustrated with the tight supply, our clients and prospects continue to reach out to us requesting information on how to set up on-site COVID-19 vaccinations for their employees. **As of today, employers have three options to get their workforce vaccinated:**

- 1. Partner with a pharmacy or health care provider to host an on-site clinic; this is the best option for most employers, *although availability of the vaccine for employers remains limited to the supply of vaccine approved and delivered to each provider, and all employees to be vaccinated must fall within the then [current phase and priority](#) as identified by the State of Massachusetts (or related State).***
- 2. Provide vaccines directly; this requires enrolling in the State's COVID-19 Vaccine Program as a provider and meeting requirements including having a chief medical officer on staff, possessing specialized freezer units to hold the vaccine, being able to administer 200 doses within 10 days, and adhering to Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) and equitable distribution requirements.** This option has worked mainly for only a handful of employers, typically those with health care operations. Employers interested in administering vaccines directly can review requirements for applying [here](#).
- 3. Encourage all phase/priority individuals to participate in State run clinics and not wait for "possible" employer on-site events.**

Currently, the State continues to have far more capacity to deliver vaccinations than there is available vaccine; this past Saturday, Governor Baker shared that the State has the capacity to administer 242,000 doses of vaccine a week, but has only been receiving 103,000 to 106,000 doses a week. The Administration's goal is to deliver as much vaccine as they have capacity, and thus they have stepped up efforts in recent weeks to reach out to large businesses willing and able to administer COVID-19 vaccines to their employees.

As of today, we are still in Phase 1 which allows individuals in priority groups (health care workers, first responders and those working in long term care, rest home or assisted living facilities) and those age 75+ to get the vaccine. Vaccinations for individuals 65+, those with 2+ comorbidities, and/or residents and staff of low income and affordable senior housing are expected to start toward the end of February, followed by other workers, including medical supply chain workers, in March, and the general public in April (see phases [here](#)).

What Can Employers Do Now?

Most employers want to get vaccines to their workforces as soon as possible, but to date very few have committed to partnering with third parties or been able to meet requirements to directly provide vaccines. In the interim here are 7 things you can do while waiting for availability to increase:

- 1. Continue to focus on protection;** stress the need to continue to wear masks, socially distance, frequently wash hands, and stay home if you have COVID-19 like symptoms.



2. **Educate your employees about the vaccine;** share information on safety, efficacy and how it works. Share the “Trust the Facts. Get the Vax” video [here](#). See also [COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet](#) and [Why Get Vaccinated?](#) *Contact Sullivan Benefits for other employee-facing communications about the vaccine.*
3. **Encourage employees to get the vaccine as soon as possible;** share information on [eligibility, vaccine location and schedules](#), and how to [prepare for an appointment](#).
4. **Implement workforce policies that allow for time off to get the vaccination with pay.** *Contact Sullivan Benefits for sample policies.*
5. **Consider engaging a third party to host an on-site clinic;** third parties are offering quotes now for future clinics when there is available supply.
6. **If you are a large employer and can meet the State’s requirements, consider providing a vaccine directly to your employees.**
7. **Contact Sullivan Benefits for help with educational materials and other resources;** and, similar to offering the flu vaccine, should Nan the Nurse have an opportunity to offer COVID-19 vaccines at corporate events, we will reach out and offer scheduling opportunities as soon as available.

Questions?

We’re here for you! Reach out to any member of the [Sullivan Benefits Team](#) with your questions, requests for materials or more information.

This document not intended to be exhaustive nor should any discussion or opinions be construed as legal advice; contact your legal counsel for legal advice.