

Employer Best Practices for Addressing COVID-19 Vaccination

It is not vaccines, but the act of vaccinating, that saves lives. Safe and effective vaccines against COVID-19 have been developed, but if the vaccines are not given it will not matter how much time, effort, and money went into developing them. It is important to instill confidence and provide clear and evidence-based information on COVID-19 vaccines to empower your staff to make informed and educated decisions regarding vaccination.

Tips on how to encourage vaccine uptake at your organization

It is critical that organizational leaders play an active role in promoting and/or providing COVID-19 vaccine to their staff and employees.

Leadership should encourage staff to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

- Leaders should pledge to get vaccinated if they haven't already.
- Leadership should send a company-wide email or memo encouraging vaccination.
- Lead with empathy, listen openly to concerns, and be respectful and non-judgmental when addressing staff and employees' questions regarding COVID-19 vaccination.

Encourage staff to learn more about COVID-19 vaccination.

- Send educational materials to your employees for them to review.
 - Check out the workplace toolkit on the NDDoH website [here](#).
 - The NDDoH has a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document that answers many of the common concerns/questions that people have about COVID-19 vaccine it can be accessed [here](#).
 - It is important to provide multilingual resources for employees who speak languages other than English. For translated COVID-19 vaccine resources click [here](#).
- Consider hosting an educational session at your workplace.

Consider hosting a vaccination clinic at your workplace.

- Contact your local health department, pharmacy or whoever provides influenza vaccination to your employees for information.
- Promote and offer the vaccination during work hours.
- File out the NDDoH [COVID-19 Vaccine Workplace Information Survey](#)

If hosting a vaccination clinic at your workplace is not possible, consider other steps to encourage vaccination, such as:

Be flexible in your human resources policies.

- Establish policies that allow employees to take paid leave to seek COVID-19 vaccination in the community.
- Support transportation to off-site vaccination clinics.
- Provide incentives (e.g. reduced testing, bonus or paid leave to employees who complete vaccine series).

Use promotional posters/flyers to advertise locations offering COVID-19 vaccination in the community.

- Display posters about COVID-19 vaccination in break rooms, cafeterias, and other high-traffic areas. The CDC and NDDoH have a variety of posters available, they can be found at:
 - [COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit | NDDoH](#)
 - [COVID-19 Vaccine Posters/Flyers | CDC](#)

Post resources in company communications.

- Publish articles (e.g. newsletters, intranet, emails, portals) about the importance of COVID-19 vaccination and where to get the vaccine in the community.
 - [COVID-19 Vaccine Introductory Letter | NDDoH](#)
 - [COVID-19 Vaccine Newsletter Content | NDDoH](#)

Emphasize the benefits of vaccinating against COVID-19

Leadership within your organization should provide strong and clear guidance regarding COVID-19 vaccination. Further, it is important that everyone is able to make an informed decision about vaccination. This includes weighing the benefits of vaccination and the risks associated with not vaccinating and getting COVID-19:

Getting vaccinated will save lives.

- Employers who provide clear and accurate information about COVID-19 vaccine can help to increase vaccine uptake among their workers. By promoting vaccination at your facility, employees who vaccinate not only protect themselves from getting sick but may also protect their family, friends, customers, and their fellow co-workers from the virus.

COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective.

- Millions of people in the United States have received COVID-19 vaccines under the most intense safety monitoring in U.S. history.
- COVID-19 vaccine continue to provide strong protection against hospitalization and deaths from the Delta variant.
- Side effects from COVID-19 vaccination are typically mild and resolve on their own in 1-2 days.

- The most common side effects are pain at the site of injection, feeling tired, headache, body aches, chills, and fever.
- Severe adverse reactions to vaccination are extremely rare.

The risks of COVID-19 are real.

- The risk of an infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 are still being determined, but research has shown us that:
 - [New variants](#) of COVID-19 (like Delta and Omicron) spread more easily and cause more cases of the virus, which can lead to more hospitalizations and deaths from COVID-19.
 - Unvaccinated people are [17x more likely](#) to be hospitalized with COVID-19.
 - Young and middle-aged adults now [represent](#) a majority of new cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.
 - The virus can have a significant and long-term impact on your [lungs](#), [heart](#), [kidneys](#), and [nervous system](#).
 - [33%-67%](#) of individuals who tested positive for COVID, but weren't hospitalized from the virus, still experience symptoms up to weeks to months later.
 - It may lead to a [6x higher risk](#) of erectile dysfunction compared to those with no history of COVID-19
 - [One in three](#) COVID-19 survivors have suffered from a neurological or mental health condition within 6 months of their COVID-19 diagnoses. To put this into perspective, these conditions were 44% higher after COVID-19 than after the flu.

If you are eligible, you should get a COVID-19 booster dose

CDC [recommendations](#) state that everyone 18 and older should get a booster shot either when they are 6 months after their initial Pfizer or Moderna series or 2 months after their initial Johnson & Johnson vaccine. Eligible individuals may choose which vaccine they receive as a booster dose. Some people may have a preference for the vaccine type that they originally received, and others may prefer to get a different booster. CDC's recommendations now allow for this type of mix and match dosing for booster shots.

On December 9, 2021, the FDA expanded the use of a single booster dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for administration to individuals 16 and 17 years of age at least six months after completion of a primary series of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. Pfizer's vaccine is the only COVID-19 vaccines currently available for the 16- and 17- year-old age group. Individuals who are 16 and 17 years of age should only receive the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine as their booster dose.

The recent emergence of the Omicron variant (B.1.1.529) further emphasizes the importance of vaccination, boosters, and prevention efforts needed to protect against COVID-19. Early data from South Africa suggest increased transmissibility of the Omicron variant, and scientists in the United

Distribute COVID-19 vaccine resources to your staff and employees

The CDC, NDDoH, National Safety Council and Health Action Alliance have developed a number of COVID-19 vaccine resources that can be used to promote vaccine at your facility. These toolkits/resources will help your organization educate employees about COVID-19 vaccines, raise awareness about the benefits of vaccination, and address common questions and concerns. These toolkits/resources can be accessed at:

- [COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit for Employers | NDDoH](#)
- [Workplace COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit | CDC](#)
- [SAFER: Vaccines | National Safety Council](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Resources for the Business Community | Health Action Alliance](#)

Additional useful resources on COVID-19 vaccine include:

- [ND Commerce COVID-19 Business and Employer Resources](#)
- [Immunization Guidance for the Public | NDDoH](#)
- [COVID-19 Booster Doses FAQ | NDDoH](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine & Pregnancy Handout | NDDoH](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccines & Fetal Cell Lines Handout | NDDoH](#)
- [What is considered an underlying medical condition for severe COVID-19? | NDDoH](#)

Have additional questions on COVID-19 vaccine? Contact the NDDoH at: covidvaccine@nd.gov