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February 25, 2022

**TO:** Points of Dispensing participating in the COVID-19 Vaccination Program

**FROM:** Judith M. Persichilli, R.N., B.S.N., M.A. Commissioner 

**SUBJECT:** Modification of mRNA COVID-19 Vaccine Primary Series and Additional Dose Intervals

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**Effective February 22, 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated their recommendations regarding the optimal interval between the first and second dose of an mRNA series.**

- Some people aged 12 through 64 years – and especially males aged 12 through 39 years – would benefit from getting their second mRNA vaccine dose eight weeks after receiving their first dose based on individual risk assessment.

**Effective February 11, 2022, the CDC updated guidance for moderately or severely immunocompromised people, including:**

- Clarification of existing recommendations to receive a three dose mRNA vaccine primary series followed by a booster dose (for a total of four doses).
- Shortening of the interval between completion of the mRNA vaccine primary series and the booster dose to at least three months (instead of five months).
- Recommendation for those who received the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine primary series to receive an additional dose and a booster dose.

**Effective February 11, 2022, the CDC removed the interval between receipt of a passive COVID-19 antibody product (e.g. monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma) and receipt of a COVID-19 vaccination.** However, in people who previously received a COVID-19 vaccine, administration of tixagevimab/cilgavimab (EVUSHELD™) for pre-exposure prophylaxis should be deferred for at least two weeks after vaccination.

**Effective February 11, 2022, the CDC issued Emergency Use Instructions (EUI) for the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.** EUI for the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine remains in effect.

This memo serves to alert you to the amended use of the Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccines in New Jersey. Please share this information with appropriate staff in your program. Thank you for your partnership in this initiative. This memo supplements the other materials circulated by the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) regarding the provision, delivery, and administration of COVID-19 vaccines. [https://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/topics/covid2019\\_vaccination.shtml](https://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/topics/covid2019_vaccination.shtml). Points of

Dispensing may contact the New Jersey Department of Health Vaccine Operations Center at [Vax.Operations@doh.nj.gov](mailto:Vax.Operations@doh.nj.gov) with any further questions.

**Administration timeline**

The CDC’s Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Approved or Authorized in the United States outlines updated recommendations for the intervals between doses: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/clinical-considerations/covid-19-vaccines-us.html>

General COVID-19 vaccination schedule:

Age Cohort	Primary series vaccine manufacturer	Primary Series		Boosters	
		Number of doses in primary series	Interval between 1 <sup>st</sup> dose and 2 <sup>nd</sup> dose	Number of booster doses	Interval between primary series and booster dose
Aged 5 through 11 years old	Pediatric Pfizer	2 doses	3 weeks	N/A	N/A
Aged 12 through 17 years old	Adolescent /Adult Pfizer	2 doses	3 to 8 weeks	1 dose	At least 5 months
Aged 18 and older	Adolescent /Adult Pfizer	2 doses	3 to 8 weeks	1 dose	At least 5 months
	Moderna	2 doses	4 to 8 weeks	1 dose	At least 5 months
	Johnson & Johnson (Janssen)	1 dose	N/A	1 dose	At least 2 months

COVID-19 vaccination schedule for persons who are moderately or severely immunocompromised:

Age Cohort	Primary series vaccine manufacturer	Primary Series			Boosters	
		Number of doses in primary series	Interval between 1 <sup>st</sup> dose and 2 <sup>nd</sup> dose	Interval between 2 <sup>nd</sup> dose and 3 <sup>rd</sup> dose (“additional dose”)	Number of booster doses	Interval between primary series and booster dose (“4 <sup>th</sup> dose”)
Aged 5 through 11 years old	Pediatric Pfizer	3 doses	3 weeks	At least 4 weeks	N/A	N/A
Aged 12 through 17 years old	Adolescent /Adult Pfizer	3 doses	3 weeks	At least 4 weeks	1 dose	At least 3 months

Aged 18 and older	Adolescent /Adult Pfizer	3 doses	3 weeks	At least 4 weeks	1 dose	At least 3 months
	Moderna	3 doses	4 weeks	At least 4 weeks	1 dose	At least 3 months
	Johnson & Johnson (Janssen)	2 doses (2 <sup>nd</sup> dose should be mRNA)	4 weeks	N/A	1 dose	At least 2 months

*Note: “Fully vaccinated” remains defined as at least two weeks after their second dose in a two-dose series, such as the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines, or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as the Johnson & Johnson/Janssen vaccine. This definition applies to all people, including those who receive an additional dose as recommended for moderate to severely immunocompromised people and those who receive a booster dose. “Up to date” means a person has received all recommended COVID-19 vaccines, including any booster dose(s) when eligible.*

Additional timing clinical considerations include:

- *Recipients with prior SARS-CoV-2 infection:* Do not delay. COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for everyone ages 5 years and older, regardless of a history of symptomatic or asymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infection. This includes people with prolonged post-COVID-19 symptoms and applies to primary series and booster doses. This recommendation also applies to people who experience SARS-CoV-2 infection before or after receiving any COVID-19 dose.
- *Recipients with current SARS-CoV-2 infection:* Defer vaccination until recovery from the acute illness (if symptoms were present) and criteria to discontinue isolation have been met. In certain circumstances, to avoid missed opportunities for vaccination, vaccination during quarantine could be considered during outreach and contact tracing activities or at the time of post-exposure SARS-CoV-2 testing.
- *Recipients of passive antibody product treatments (e.g. monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma):* Do not delay.
- *Recipients of passive antibody products for pre-exposure prophylaxis (e.g. tixagevimab/cilgavimab – EVUSHELD™):* Defer PrEP until at least 2 weeks after COVID-19 vaccination.
- *Recipients who are pregnant, lactating, trying to get pregnant now, or who might become pregnant in the future:* Do not delay.
- *Recipients with multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) or adults (MIS-A):* Recipient should consult their healthcare provider.
- *Recipients of HCT or CAR-T-cell therapy:* Revaccinate for any dose(s) received before or during treatment. Revaccination should start at least 3 months (12 weeks) after transplant or therapy.
- *Recipients of immunosuppressive therapies:* Administer COVID-19 vaccines at least 2 weeks before initiation or resumption of therapies.

### Scheduling

Update all appointment schedulers to account for updated administration timelines. Points of dispensing (PODs) must continue to be listed on the [New Jersey COVID-19 Information Hub](#) and your POD must update NJDOH in a timely manner if any information on the state website is incomplete or out-of-date.

Before a vaccination recipient departs the vaccination site, PODs should schedule each vaccine recipient for their next recommended dose at the appropriate interval.

PODs must use recall and reminder methods to message eligibility for primary series completion and booster completion to COVID-19 vaccine recipients who are eligible for their next dose.

In addition to appointments, walk-ins should still be accommodated. This is especially important to ensure timely access without barriers for those who are unvaccinated, those newly eligible (e.g. just turned five years old), and those due for their second, third, or fourth dose.

### Site Readiness

To accommodate as many eligible vaccine recipients as soon as possible, all active sites should prepare to have additional vaccines on hand at all vaccine events, provide night and weekend hours, accommodate walk-ins, update appointment availability reflected on the New Jersey Vaccine Appointment Finder (<https://covid19.nj.gov/finder>), and share information with NJDOH about pop-up vaccination clinics to be included in the COVID-19 Community Calendar (<https://covid19.nj.gov/pages/communitycalendar>). Sites are also encouraged to actively promote the availability of primary series and booster doses. If additional vaccine supply is needed at a site, please be in touch with New Jersey Department of Health to arrange for allocation and/or transfer.

To the extent possible while maintaining appropriate vaccine stewardship, all points of dispensing are expected to optimize use of all COVID-19 vaccines. No vaccination opportunity should be missed, so sites should request and carry sufficient inventory to vaccinate at capacity.

### Federal recommendation

Current revised EUAs with updated fact sheets and translations for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) authorized and approved COVID-19 vaccines:

- For Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine: <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/comirnaty-and-pfizer-biontech-covid-19-vaccine>
- For Moderna vaccine: <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/spikevax-and-moderna-covid-19-vaccine>
- For Johnson & Johnson/Janssen vaccine: <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/janssen-covid-19-vaccine>

The CDC issued Emergency Use Instructions (EUI) for certain people who completed a vaccine primary series with certain COVID-19 vaccines that are not authorized or approved by the FDA. Current fact sheets:

- For Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine:
  - EUI Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/eui/downloads/pfizer-HCP.pdf>

- EUI Fact Sheet for Recipients and Caregivers: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/eui/downloads/Pfizer-Caregiver.pdf>
- For Moderna vaccine:
  - EUI Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/eui/downloads/Moderna-HCP.pdf>
  - EUI Fact Sheet for Recipients and Caregivers: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/eui/downloads/Moderna-Caregiver.pdf>

#### Additional guidance

- Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Approved or Authorized in the United States: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/clinical-considerations/covid-19-vaccines-us.html>
- World Health Organization Emergency Use List: <https://extranet.who.int/pqweb/vaccines/vaccinescovid-19-vaccine-eul-issued>

#### Provider education

Please ensure vaccination providers are trained and well versed in the updated vaccine information, provider fact sheet, and clinical considerations. We expect providers to be prepared to address questions from their patients and their families. Information about COVID-19 vaccines and training materials is available through the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/index.html>. Please see CDC's Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Authorized in the United States: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/clinical-considerations/covid-19-vaccines-us.html>

#### Consumer education

Points of dispensing play a critical role in building trust in vaccination. Please note CDC's dedicated webpage with information on staying Up to Date on COVID-19 vaccination: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/stay-up-to-date.html>.

Information specific to those who are moderately or severely immunocompromised is available: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/recommendations/immuno.html>.