

COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

COVID-19 Vaccine Allocation Process

The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) is being allocated doses of COVID-19 vaccine weekly from the federal government. The NDDoH will take the doses that have been allocated and equitably distribute them to enrolled providers each week based on the current vaccination priority group and population estimates.

For example, if North Dakota receives enough doses to cover 25% of Phase 1A priority groups, providers will receive approximately 25% of their population estimates for that priority group. This isn't exact as there are always variances including inventory on hand, vaccine uptake and rounding to the nearest package quantity. At this time providers may be allocated more than one brand of COVID-19 vaccine. The NDDoH Division of immunization will do their best to limit providers having more than one brand on hand. When possible, Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine will be prioritized for more urban areas and providers who have ultra-cold storage.

COVID-19 Vaccine Allocation Approval

Enrolled providers that are receiving an allocation will receive an email early in the week to approve, reject or adjust their allocation. Decisions on whether providers accept their allocation should be based on whether they can safely store the vaccine and vaccine uptake and demand. Doses that are rejected will be reallocated to another provider; they will not be held. These emails will be sent to the COVID email contact, primary and back-up vaccine contacts that were submitted on each of the facilities' provider enrollments. Provider offices will have 24 hours to respond to the email. Providers who do not respond to this email will have their allocations cancelled. After this time period allocations will be finalized and sent to the CDC as COVID-19 vaccine orders.

COVID-19 Vaccine Delivery

Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine will be shipped directly from Pfizer in increments of 975 doses. Moderna COVID-19 vaccine will be shipped directly from McKesson in increments of 100 doses. Doses in other increments will be shipped to the NDDoH Warehouse and then repackaged into smaller quantities and transported to providers. The NDDoH Division of Immunizations will try to round to minimum shipping package quantities and utilize direct shipments whenever possible, but when vaccine is limited it is possible that providers will receive direct shipments of vaccine and from the NDDoH warehouse.

For example, if you are allocated 150 doses of Moderna vaccine, you will receive 100 doses from McKesson and 50 doses from the NDDoH warehouse. Those providers receiving shipments from the warehouse will not see any order or tracking information in NDIIS.

Direct Vaccine Shipments

Direct shipments will come from the manufacturer (Pfizer) or McKesson to provider sites. Direct shipments will only be for those vaccine orders that are full package quantities. This means only those facilities that will be allocated 975 dose increments from Pfizer and/or 100 dose increments from Moderna will be direct shipments.

Direct ship recipients should be able to view tracking information in the NDIIS ordering module, however the NDDoH Division of Immunization may not receive this information much before vaccine is delivered. The NDDoH Division of Immunization intends on placing COVID-19 vaccine orders for Monday and Tuesday deliveries as much as possible, but there may be some variances based on availability of vaccines and providers should expect orders whenever your facility is open.

NDDoH Warehouse Vaccine Shipments

Providers that will not receive the entire package quantity (975 or 100 doses depending on the manufacturer) will receive their vaccine order from the NDDoH warehouse. The anticipated vaccine delivery date of these vaccines will be within 24 hours of the warehouse receiving the vaccine from the manufacturer or McKesson.

The warehouse will make delivery arrangements with each facility the day prior to delivery to ensure that the facility will be able to accept the vaccine.

When vaccine is enroute, the primary contact for the facility will receive a phone call from the NDDoH staff making the delivery when they are approximately 30 minutes from your facility. This will let staff know that they will soon be receiving their shipment. If staff do not respond to that call, the facility will be bypassed, and the warehouse staff will move to their next point of delivery. If staff are able, they may attempt to redeliver that same day, when possible otherwise warehouse staff will make arrangements to deliver another day.

COVID-19 Vaccine Redistribution

Redistribution of COVID-19 vaccine occurs when a provider receives COVID-19 vaccine shipments at one centralized location (such as hospital pharmacy). Vaccine is then distributed by the central location to enrolled provider offices within that provider's own system. The primary facility that receives the vaccine would determine the quantity of vaccine to send to each enrolled facility within their system based on the total allocation given to the primary facility. A redistribution agreement is required to be signed by the facility prior to vaccine being

received. All doses that are being sent to additional locations within a health system or local public health district must be transferred from the primary location to the secondary sites receiving COVID-19 vaccine in the NDIIIS. Redistribution does not require preauthorization from the NDDoH Division of Immunizations. Currently redistribution agreements are only being approved for large health systems who can store ultra-cold vaccine and district local public health departments.

COVID-19 Vaccine Transfer

A transfer of COVID-19 vaccine would occur when vaccine is sent to a COVID-19 vaccine enrolled provider outside of the original provider's system. A COVID-19 vaccine transfer requires preauthorization from the NDDoH Division of Immunization and will only occur in rare circumstances. Providers do not need to have a vaccine redistribution agreement to transfer vaccine to another enrolled provider office. An example could be transferring vaccine to a provider due to having an overabundance of vaccine, lower than anticipated uptake or using vaccine before it is considered non-viable.

Provider offices will be required to transfer all vaccine lot number(s) in the NDIIIS. This does need to occur so that provider offices are able to document all vaccine doses administered within 24 hours of administration. There are trainings on the NDDoH Division of Immunization website <https://www.health.nd.gov/immunize/ndiis/trainings> if you need assistance in transferring the lot number in NDIIIS.

Storage and Handling for Vaccine Transport

All vaccine should be transported according to the guidance supplied by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Vaccine should be transported in a qualified packouts or vaccine transport cooler with a digital data logger. The vaccine should be transported at the appropriate temperature indicated by the vaccine brand they are transferring. Refrigerated vaccine should be transported at 2° - 8°C (36° - 46°F) and frozen vaccine should be transported at -50° to -15°C (-58° to 5°F). While in transport, vaccine temperatures should be monitored and documented every 30 minutes. Temperature logs can be found on the on the NDDoH Division of Immunization website <https://www.health.nd.gov/immunize/storage-and-handling>. Guidance about transporting vaccine can also be found on that website.