

UPDATE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)



Stay informed. Take precautions. Stay safe.

Dear Members,

On December 10, 2020, the Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research's (CBER), Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) met in open session to discuss Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine for the prevention of COVID-19 in individuals 16 years of age and older. They publicly evaluated evidence for approval of the COVID-19 vaccine developed by Pfizer and its partner BioNTech and have recommended approval of it, clearing the way for the FDA to grant emergency authorization. Mass-ALA has been monitoring state and national updates regarding COVID-19 vaccine delivery, as well as advocating with the state for prioritized and efficient distribution of the vaccine to assisted living residents and staff. Here is an update with information that will help you to be prepared for vaccine delivery once it is approved.

1. Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker announced on December 9th that the Commonwealth, in consultation with the Massachusetts Vaccine Advisory Group, has developed a schedule for prioritization, delivery, and distribution of the vaccine. Some of the main points of his press conference are as follows:

- Initial delivery of vaccine may occur on 12/15.
- The initial allocation of the Pfizer vaccine from CDC to Massachusetts is limited, but the anticipated amount of vaccine is expected to increase by the end of December
- Initial allocation in response to the initial phase of the distribution plan focuses on capacity to administer the Pfizer vaccine and geographic equity
- Based on the initial priority list and the limited availability of the Pfizer vaccine, allocation of the vaccine in the initial shipment of 60,000 vaccines will be only to hospitals
- Initial vaccines will be administered to healthcare workers who provide care to COVID-19 patients as well as first responders and those who live and work in long term care, including assisted living, and other congregate settings
- All providers will receive guidance in the next several days about training, storage and handling of vaccine, and those scheduled to receive the initial vaccinations
- The vaccine is to be administered in two stages, with the second dose to be administered 21 days or 28 days (depending upon the manufacturer) after the initial dose.

- Additional information about vaccine distribution is available [here](#)
- Vaccine distribution in MA will occur in a phased approach, which is outlined in the illustration below.



2. For ALRs that have registered with CVS or Walgreens for delivery of the vaccine, the links below provide detailed information regarding the process by which the vaccines will be delivered.

- CVS Guide can be found [here](#).
- CVS Webinar can be found [here](#).
- Walgreens information can be found [here](#).

If you are registered with CVS for vaccine delivery and have not received information from them or would need to reach out with questions, you may contact them at: CovidVaccineClinicsLTCF@CVSHealth.com

We reached out to Walgreens as well and will send contact info for them when we receive it.

3. Argentum presented a webinar this week on the evolution of the anticipated vaccine and the process that was followed in order to arrive at the point where the product being distributed is as safe and effective as possible. They referenced a recent interview done by The Washington Post, featuring **Anthony Fauci, MD**, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID.) Dr. Fauci cautions people to be prepared for the following reactions after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine: **arm discomfort, mild swelling, ache, and a 24-hour fever**. In addition to the detailed report on the science behind vaccine development, highlights about the development of the vaccine were featured in the webinar and are listed below.

- Only safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines that have been rigorously tested in large, well-designed studies with tens of thousands of volunteers will be available.
- COVID-19 vaccines are following the same rigorous, multi-phased testing process as every other vaccine.
- COVID-19 vaccine development is moving faster than normal because our top medical experts have made it their highest priority, not because steps in the testing process are being skipped.
- The FDA will share information about authorized or approved COVID-19 vaccines so you can see the scientific evidence for yourself.
- COVID-19 vaccine developers are trying to make sure their clinical trials reflect the nation's diversity, because these vaccines must be proven safe and effective for everyone.
- Medical experts and career public health officials, not politicians or their appointees, will decide when a COVID-19 vaccine is safe, effective, and ready for public use.

4. Argentum will offer another webinar on December 14th, which will provide a Vaccine Readiness Briefing. See below for more information and to register [here](#) for this webinar (*must be an Argentum member to register*).

UPCOMING WEBINAR

Vaccine Readiness Briefing

Monday, December 14 | 1 PM ET

Vaccine administration is one of the most important issues the senior living industry will address this year. This webinar will provide insight and information to help senior living leaders prepare and be ready to get this right.

If you have questions, please contact, MassALA@mass-ala.org

**The information provided in this COVID 19 update is solely for general informational purposes to assist in understanding the evolving guidance regarding the current COVID 19 public health threat. It is not intended to be a primary public health or medical resource, but is provided as a clearinghouse for or compilation of various guidance issued by official and related sources.*