

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What principles are being used to prioritize the delivery of vaccines across the province?

- **Reducing morbidity and mortality (disease and death) in the community.**
- **Protecting the integrity of and access to the healthcare system.**

2. When will the community be provided updates about the status of COVID-19 vaccine rollout in our region?

HPEPH will continue to keep the community informed as vaccine is received and we move through the various three Phases. Groups that are eligible for vaccine in Phases 1 and 2 of the provincial plan will likely be notified directly by HPEPH. When Phase 3 begins and the vaccine is available to the public, HPEPH will share notifications about public vaccination clinics through a variety of communication channels. The current status of vaccination rollout in our region continues to be available at hpepublichealth.ca/covid-19-vaccines.

3. When will it be my turn to get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Timelines for local implementation of the provincial rollout and eligibility associated with each phase continues to evolve based on vaccine availability. We are working to ensure that individuals receive the vaccine as soon as they become eligible. Timelines for eligible groups continue to be approximate as vaccine supply becomes available.

We are working diligently behind the scenes to be as prepared as possible to get the vaccine to eligible groups as soon as we receive it. We are gathering other necessary supplies like syringes, needles, alcohol swabs, band-aids and everything else we need to run vaccine clinics. We are planning ahead so we are prepared to offer large scale clinics to broader groups.

4. How will I find out when it is my turn to get the vaccine?

In Phases 1 and 2, eligible groups will be notified directly by HPEPH (through their employer or other administrators). As more vaccine becomes available and eligibility expands, HPEPH will share information about any opportunities for the general public to receive the vaccine. For the most up to date information available to the public, visit hpepublichealth.ca/covid-19-vaccines.

5. Will there be a waitlist when the vaccine is available for the general public?

HPEPH is not offering a wait list for COVID-19 vaccination at the current time. As plans and timing are finalized regarding availability/accessibility of the vaccine for the general public, HPEPH will share information about how and when to access vaccination opportunities.

6. Where can I find out more about how priority groups are determined?

As vaccine prioritization and allocations are determined by the province, local public health units follow the direction set out by the Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Health has shared their ethical framework and guidelines for distribution to health care providers [online](#). Any decisions made at the local level are based on [national](#), provincial and local recommendations and guidelines and in consultation with local partners.

7. Why are long term care staff receiving the vaccine before acute care/hospital staff?

The decision making around who gets the vaccine at what time is guided by the province's [ethical framework](#). With the core principles of protecting the health care system and reducing death and disease related to COVID-19, prioritizing long term care home staff and residents will ensure those who are most vulnerable are protected. This will also help reduce the likelihood that these individuals will end up in hospital due to COVID-19 related complications, which in turn, reduces the risk of exposure for acute care/hospital staff.

8. Why are some healthcare workers in lower risk areas getting vaccinated earlier in other parts of the province?

As vaccines are being prioritized to areas with higher rates of COVID-19, some regions received more of their allotment earlier in the rollout process with an aim to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in high risk areas. Our region has had relatively stable rates of COVID-19, so we have received a smaller initial allotment since the risk of community transmission in our region is relatively low.

9. Who will receive the vaccination after long term care and health care workers?

Phase 1 priority groups will receive the vaccination over several weeks/months. Phase 1 groups are being prioritized into sub-groups based on level of risk and potential exposure. For example, health care workers have varying levels of risk and some may receive the vaccine much sooner than others. While HPEPH continues to receive information from the province and connect with local partners to prioritize vaccine delivery appropriately, current plans, including anticipated sub-groups are available at hpepublichealth.ca/covid-19-vaccines.

10. Will vaccine be distributed based on seniority?

No. Distributing a scarce resource by seniority is not deemed ethical.

11. Why will some groups of healthy individuals receive the vaccine before others who may have health concerns?

Certain groups have been identified as a priority to receive the vaccine due to their increased risk of exposure or outbreak. For example, Indigenous people in Canada have been identified as a priority group to receive the vaccine due to risk of outbreak in isolated settings and disproportionate impact of past pandemics.

12. What is the province's policy on vaccinating children for COVID-19?

Health Canada has approved the Pfizer vaccine for people 16 years of age and older and the Moderna vaccine for people 18 years of age and older. As further scientific evidence is released additional information regarding vaccination of children will be released.

13. How will we be tracking who receives the vaccine?

The COVID-19 vaccine will not be mandated for Ontarians, but we strongly suggest that people embrace the opportunity to be vaccinated. Ontarians will receive proof of immunization for COVID-19 and the province has a centralized IT solution that is supporting the COVID-19 vaccine clinics and administration sites.

14. Once the vaccine supply is stabilized and increased, how will we reach those who may be reluctant to get vaccinated?

We recognize individuals may be reluctant for many reasons. We are working to understand attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccinations and we will ensure tools are available to help residents make decisions about vaccination that are informed by reliable evidence.

15. Who can I contact if I disagree with the approach to vaccine rollout in our region?

We are committed to delivering the COVID-19 vaccine equitably, in alignment with the province's ethical framework. We are working with an [ethicist](#) to ensure that our decision making is morally justified. However, if you have feedback on our prioritization process, please submit it through our [online form](#).

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