

COVID-19

Frequently Asked Questions

For Employers



Q) What is the process for getting/scheduling the vaccine?

A) Individuals will need to schedule a vaccine appointment for one of our vaccination sites. Walk-ins are not permitted. We encourage individuals to use or create a MyWellSpan account to make the appointment and scheduling process easier. Simply [log in to MyWellSpan](#) or [create your MyWellSpan account](#).

If you qualify for a COVID-19 vaccine in the current vaccination Phase:

As appointments are available, an eligible person can schedule a vaccination appointment using their MyWellSpan account in the "Schedule an Appointment" section.

Employees without a WellSpan primary care provider or who do not have a MyWellSpan account, can schedule through the COVID-19 Hotline: **(855) 851-3641**.

Please recognize that due to the high demand for the COVID-19 vaccine, hold times for calls to the COVID-19 Hotline and primary care provider offices will likely be longer than usual.

While we are waiting for the Pennsylvania Department of Health to announce the next vaccination phase, employees can proactively sign up to be alerted when appointments are available for those who are eligible.

Please sign in to your MyWellSpan account and register your interest in the vaccine by completing the MyWellSpan "COVID-19 Vaccine Interest Questionnaire." You will be notified when scheduling is activated for your Phase.

Q) What is the current appointment availability?

A) WellSpan is working to create as many appointments as we can for the vaccine based on the supply that we are provided by the PA Department of Health. Depending on how much vaccine supply we receive from the state, availability of appointments may fluctuate.

While you are waiting for updates on new appointments, we encourage you to use or create a MyWellSpan account.

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Q) How do I know when I qualify to get a vaccine? What are the phases of distribution?

A) In alignment with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance and the PA Department of Health's phased approach to vaccination, the vaccine is currently being given to individuals in phase 1A. This includes:

- Long-term care facility residents
- Persons ages 65 and older
- Persons ages 16-64 with high-risk conditions:
 - Cancer
 - Chronic kidney disease
 - COPD
 - Down Syndrome
 - Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
 - Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant or from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines
 - Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 kg/m² or higher but < 40 kg/m²)
 - Severe obesity (BMI ≥ 40 kg/m²)
 - Pregnancy
 - Sickle cell disease
 - Smoking
 - Type 2 diabetes mellitus
- Health care personnel including, but not limited to:
 - Emergency medical service personnel
 - Nurses
 - Nursing assistants
 - Physicians
 - Dentists
 - Dental hygienists
 - Chiropractors
 - Therapists
 - Phlebotomists
 - Pharmacists
 - Technicians
 - Pharmacy technicians
 - Health professions students and trainees
 - Direct support professionals

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- Clinical personnel in school settings or correctional facilities
- Contractual HCP not directly employed by the health care facility
- Persons not directly involved in patient care but potentially exposed to infectious material that can transmit disease among or from health care personnel and patients

You can follow along with which phase Pennsylvania is in by following the Department of Health website at [Health.PA.gov](https://www.health.pa.gov/).

Also, [WellSpan.org](https://www.wellspan.org) has a dedicated COVID-19 vaccine webpage with information and answers to questions about the vaccine: <https://www.wellspan.org/covid19/covid-19-vaccine/>

Q) Is the vaccine safe?

A) Yes, the vaccine has been through a rigorous process before being authorized as safe and effective for emergency use by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Additionally, WellSpan experts have carefully reviewed the available research data and find the vaccine to be safe and effective.

Q) Where can my employees go to get their vaccine?

A) Employees can schedule a vaccination at one of more than 20 locations across our region. They can select a location when they are scheduling their appointment with their MyWellSpan portal.

Q) What do employees need to do to demonstrate that they qualify for the vaccine?

A) We are asking people to self-identify and provide their occupation and employer's name when they schedule online.

Q) Do employers need to provide a list of employees who qualify for registration purposes?

A) No. Employees will self-schedule. When they do, they will be asked their occupation and employer's name.

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Q) Will WellSpan provide onsite employer vaccinations?

A) At this time, we are encouraging employers to guide their employees to a WellSpan vaccination site and schedule directly through the MyWellSpan portal. We will update you if additional options become available.

Q) What are the common side effects associated with the vaccine? Should I encourage my employees to stagger their scheduling time to avoid staffing shortages?

A) Most people do not have serious problems after being vaccinated. However, your arm may be sore, red, or warm to the touch. These symptoms usually go away on their own within a week. Some people report getting a headache or a fever after getting a vaccine. These side effects are a sign that your immune system is doing exactly what it is supposed to do. It is working and building up protection to disease.

In some cases, an individual could develop a fever. If your workplace has temperature checks, they likely will be unable to work. It would be good to consider this possibility when encouraging employees to schedule their vaccine. We recommend staggering schedule times to avoid possible shortages.

Q) How long is the post vaccine observation period?

A) We will ask each person vaccinated to remain at the vaccination site to be observed for 15-30 minutes to ensure they are not experiencing a reaction to the vaccine.

Q) What vaccines are available, and do I have a choice?

A) Pfizer and Moderna are two different pharmaceutical manufacturers who are producing COVID-19 vaccines. Both organizations have received authorization for emergency use. While no vaccine is 100% effective, current studies have shown both company's COVID-19 vaccines to be over 90% effective. Both vaccinations require two doses. Both of the vaccines work by the same biological mechanism. At this time, the vaccines are not interchangeable because the safety and effectiveness of a mixed vaccine series has not been tested. You should complete your vaccine series with the same brand product.

WellSpan patients will be offered the vaccine that has been allotted by federal and state health authorities to WellSpan Health.

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Q) Must employees receive the second dose? If so, how is this scheduled and the timeframe for the second dose?

A) Your employees are highly encouraged to get both doses in order to receive maximum protection from the virus. The second dose can be scheduled immediately after receiving the first dose. WellSpan team members can assist them with this while they are being observed following their vaccine.

Q) Once I receive the vaccine, what do I need to know?

A) The protective effect of the vaccine is not immediate, and it requires two doses. Also, it will take months for enough doses to be made available for most of the community. Masking, hand hygiene and social distancing will need to continue with vaccination to effectively fight the COVID-19 pandemic.