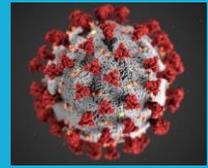


# Georgia INTERIM COVID-19 VACCINATION PLAN



## Executive Summary - DRAFT

10/15/2020

### Introduction

The Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) understands the development of a successful COVID-19 vaccination program requires a strong partnership between federal, state, and local clinical and non-clinical partners. Through these established partnerships and following guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), DPH is working to ensure Georgia is prepared and ready to actively respond once vaccines become available.

The H1N1 pandemic demonstrated that well planned and executed mass vaccination efforts, are an effective method for addressing and slowing the spread of disease resulting from a naturally occurring pandemic. This statewide Mass Vaccination Distribution and Administration Plan will be used as a state protocol for the distribution and administration of the COVID-19 vaccine to public health districts and other enrolled COVID-19 pandemic vaccine providers.

### COVID-19 Vaccination Planning Summary:

#### Phased Approach to COVID-19 Vaccination

The main goal throughout this response will be to ensure vaccine distribution and administration processes are in place to begin rapid vaccine administration to Georgia residents once vaccines become available. Current assumptions include a possible imbalance between vaccine demand and supply. To address this, provider sites and vaccine shipments will be prioritized according to the populations those providers serve and the key populations who have been prioritized for the vaccination effort. Critical populations will be prioritized using a four-phased approach based on their level of risk for exposure to or complications from the disease.

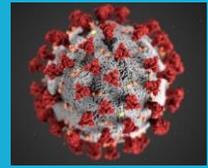
#### Critical Populations

During limited vaccine availability, GIP will utilize CDC ACIP recommendations and the National Academy of Medicine's Framework for Equitable Allocation of COVID-19 Vaccine. DPH Immunization Program will utilize a combination of existing national, state-wide, and local data sources; engagement of community-based organizations, academic institutions, and state agencies; mapping, modeling, and forecasting; and surveillance data to identify critical and priority populations. Information collected on critical populations will be compiled into a Critical Populations database maintained by DPH.

#### COVID-19 Vaccination Provider Recruitment and Enrollment

DPH began the recruitment of COVID-19 providers, August 2020, with the release of a COVID-19 vaccine provider interest survey. The enrollment process will begin with the review of submitted surveys to place interested providers into three tiers. DPH will use a phased approach to enroll providers in the COVID-19 vaccine program. Active recruitment and enrollment of new providers will continue while the COVID-19 vaccine remains available. The Georgia Immunization Program (GIP) will lead the COVID-19 vaccine enrollment activities.

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## COVID-19 Vaccine Storage and Handling

Cold chain storage and handling requirements for each vaccine product will vary from refrigerated (2° to 8° C) to frozen (-20°C) to ultra-cold (-60° to -80°C) temperatures, and ongoing stability testing may impact these requirements. Vaccines must be stored appropriately from the time they are manufactured until the time they are administered to a patient. While providers are not being asked to purchase ultracold storage units, all providers will be required to follow the CDC, ACIP, and manufacturer's guidance regarding the proper storage and handling of each vaccine.

## COVID-19 Vaccination Second-Dose Reminders

Many pharmacies and healthcare organizations have internal systems they use for patient notifications and reminders. Providers are encouraged to utilize these systems for second dose reminders to patients. DPH will implement a statewide reminder recall program to support local efforts and providing additional redundancy for second dose reminder methods.

## Section 12: COVID-19 Vaccination Program Communication

Communication plans have been established within the state DPH Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC) plan. The plan has been vetted, updated, and approved for use in emergencies with an all-hazards approach. Coordination of communication efforts about vaccine development and availability will be led by the state DPH Division of Communications.

## COVID-19 Vaccine Safety Monitoring

DPH has a policy and in place for reporting vaccine adverse events following immunization services. The Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) policy is located in the GIP Manual (Chapter 4) which is accessible on the GIP website at <https://dph.georgia.gov/immunization-section/immunization-publications>. Providers authorized to administer vaccines are required by law to report to VAERS any adverse event following immunization including a vaccine administration error. GIP will include VAERS reporting procedure job aids and website information in provider training materials and resources.

## COVID-19 Vaccination Program Monitoring

DPH will assume responsibility for continuous monitoring for vaccine-related situational awareness throughout COVID-19 vaccination response activities. GIP will use capacity maps to monitor access to COVID-19 vaccines and ensure the accessibility of these services for critical populations. GIP will review available CDC dashboards (e.g., Weekly Flu Vaccination Dashboard and COVID-19 Vaccination Response Dashboard), as additional monitoring tools. GIP will work with the Pandemic Vaccine Planning Team to share identified issues and update this plan to address these issues.