



# State of Louisiana

Louisiana Department of Health  
Office of Public Health

**DATE:** July 29, 2021  
**TO:** COVID-19 Vaccine Primary Coordinators  
**FROM:** Louisiana Immunization Program  
**SUBJECT:** COVID-19 Vaccine Storage and Ordering Updates

Please route to:

- COVID-19 Vaccine Primary Coordinators

## Extension of Johnson & Johnson Vaccine Shelf Life

The Food & Drug Administration has authorized an extension of the shelf life for the Johnson & Johnson's (J&J) Janssen COVID-19 vaccine from 4.5 months to 6 months (an additional 45 days). This decision is based on data from ongoing stability assessment studies, which have demonstrated that the vaccine is stable at six months when refrigerated at temperatures of 36 – 46 degrees Fahrenheit (2 – 8 degrees Celsius).

This expiration date change applies to all non-expired J&J vaccines currently in Louisiana. The Immunization Program will automatically update the J&J expiration dates in LINKS to reflect this new extended expiration date. **No additional provider action required related to the updating of expiration dates within LINKS.** Providers should adjust their own internal system records or any other physical documentation of expiration dates, as needed.

Expiration dates will be updated on [www.vaxcheck.la.gov](http://www.vaxcheck.la.gov) for providers to view. Vaccine providers can always visit [www.vaxcheck.la.gov](http://www.vaxcheck.la.gov) to confirm the latest expiration dates of our vaccines, including those currently available for administration throughout the U.S.

## Plan Vaccine Ordering in Advance

The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) reminds providers participating in the Louisiana COVID-19 Vaccination Program that the delivery of COVID-19 vaccinations, after order placement in LINKS, can take **3-5 business days**. The Immunization Program is currently experiencing an influx of COVID-19 vaccine orders. It is critical that vaccination providers continue to plan ahead according to help ensure vaccines are available well in-advance of when they are needed for administration to patients. The Immunization Program is unable to process orders for delivery any sooner than the 3-5 day order-to-delivery time frame.

## Direct Pfizer Orders from the Manufacturer

The Immunization Program also wants to let COVID-19 vaccination providers know that the minimum available Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine order configuration for a **direct shipment from the manufacturer** is now 450 doses. Previously, the direct minimum order of Pfizer vaccine was 1,170 doses. The 450-dose Pfizer shipment includes three trays, with 25 vials of vaccine within each tray. Reminders related to the direct from the manufacturer Pfizer shipments are as follows:

- Pfizer shipments are delivered ultra-cold (-70 degrees Celsius),
- May be stored in ULT freezer until the expiration date, or temporarily in the shipper with regular dry ice replenishment;

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- Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine vials may remain frozen at -20 degrees Celsius for up to 2 weeks;
- Pfizer COVID-19 undiluted vaccine vials may remain refrigerated for up to one month;
- Total storage time for Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine in freezer and refrigerator should not exceed 45 days.

Of course, all providers can continue to order as few as six doses of Pfizer vaccine, at a time, in LINKS. With these smaller order/shipment quantities, the orders will be filled and delivered by the state contracted vaccine redistributor, Morris & Dickson.

Should you need any assistance with ordering or if you would like to receive additional support On the LINKS vaccine ordering process, please submit your request to [La.Links@la.gov](mailto:La.Links@la.gov), or contact your Regional Immunization Consultant listed on the homepage of LINKS.