



State of Louisiana

Louisiana Department of Health
Office of Public Health

November 18, 2020

TO: Louisiana Hospitals

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SUBJECT: **Requirements for Initial COVID-19 Vaccine Allocation to Hospitals**

Louisiana hospitals must take the steps below in order to receive COVID-19 vaccine. Initial amounts are likely to be very limited in December or January, with amounts increasing to become available for all persons interested in COVID-19 vaccination. The Louisiana allocation of COVID-19 will follow national guidance for prioritization under the direction of the State Health Officer and Governor.

Hospitals interested in participating in the Louisiana COVID-19 Vaccination Response, must complete the CDC COVID-19 Provider Agreement and the Louisiana Immunization Network (LINKS) enrollment application packet (Requirements for Participation Checklist, Site Enrollment Agreement, and User Agreement). If your hospital is part of a system or network of hospitals, you must also complete the CDC Supplemental Redistribution Agreement. These documents can be found under the document center in LINKS. The deadline to submit these documents has already passed so hospitals must submit these documents as soon as possible to ensure they are registered before vaccine arrives. Additional information can be found on the LDH COVID-19 Vaccination Provider Webpage: <https://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/4073>

Documentation of COVID-19 vaccination must be entered into LINKS within 24 hours of administration. This is necessary for timely data reporting to both the federal and state government and the public. LINKS will be used to monitor vaccine inventory, with additional doses dependent on vaccine documentation in LINKS.

For hospitals that are electronically sending immunization information to LINKS, via HL7 messaging your **EMR/EHR system must be updated to accommodate COVID-19 vaccine CVX codes**, which can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/iis/code-sets.html>

Additionally, your **EMR/EHR system will need to accommodate COVID-19 vaccine NDC number**, when it becomes available following FDA approval. Federal recommendations for use may be made **within 48 hours**, so your system staff must plan for this immediate update. If a hospital is unable to document both the CVX and NDC number within their EMR/HER along with the usual immunization information, COVID-19 vaccination will have to be entered into LINKS manually.

For hospitals that are NOT electronically reporting immunization information to LINKS, all information related to COVID-19 vaccine will continue to be entered manually.

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The initial allocation of COVID-19 vaccine will be pre-positioned in a few hospital systems. OPH will evaluate locations and provide a guidance checklist. Each hospital system must receive, securely store, apportion and follow LDH guidance distribute within their hospital system. Vaccine will be delivered by a distributor to hospitals not within a hospital system that do not meet the 975 dose threshold.

The initial COVID-19 vaccine, Pfizer BioNTech vaccine candidate requires ultra-cold (-70 C) storage. It can be stored in the thermal shipper it arrives in for up to 14 days with Dry Ice if an ULT freezer is unavailable. When the product is removed from ultra-cold storage, it can be stored refrigerated for up to 5 days. When the product is removed from refrigeration, it must be reconstituted and used within 6 hours. Primary and alternate distribution planning within the hospital system must be developed and rapidly operationalized.

Current COVID-19 data, including vaccine information will be at the LDH COVID-19 website: <https://ldh.la.gov/Coronavirus/>. Please monitor that site or contact your Immunization Program Consultant or the Immunization Program at 504-568-2600 or la.immunization@la.gov.