



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

# News Release

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## VA stands ready to offer COVID-19 booster vaccines

**WASHINGTON** — The Department of Veterans Affairs has started administering Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine boosters under Emergency Use Authorization.

This decision follows the Food and Drug Administration's authorization and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendation for a booster dose of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine to:

- People 65 years and older and residents in long-term care settings should receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series.
- People aged 50–64 years with [underlying medical conditions](#) should receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series.
- People aged 18–49 years with [underlying medical conditions](#) may receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series, based on their individual benefits and risk.
- People aged 18–64 years who are at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational or institutional setting may receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series, based on their individual benefits and risks.

“These booster doses are an important step forward in the fight against COVID-19,” said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. “With the authorization of the Pfizer-BioNTech booster for eligible individuals, VA can provide Veterans an opportunity to maximize their protection, continuing our work to keep people safe and save lives during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

The safety and care of Veterans is VA's top priority, as well as ensuring the health and welfare of its workforce. VAs doors are open for walk-ins today during hours when vaccine clinics are operational, with full opening on Monday where Pfizer-BioNTech booster vaccines are available. Vaccines will be offered to Veterans receiving care at VA and employees, prioritizing those persons who are 65 and older, residents of long-term care facilities, and people 50–64 years with underlying conditions. As supply and capacity permits, VA will offer booster doses to all other Veterans, spouses, caregivers and CHAMPVA recipients under the authority of the [SAVE LIVES Act](#) (SLA), which was signed into law in March 2021. The law expanded [VA's authority to offer vaccine](#) to include Veterans [not traditionally eligible for VHA care](#), and others including spouses and caregivers of Veterans.

Veterans who receive care in VA and are due for booster shots will be contacted and advised of the recommended booster shots, which may be offered by appointment or on a walk-in basis. Veterans who received a Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine outside of VA, and persons who received a Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine in VA for whom we don't have records of their high-risk condition, will need to contact [their local VA facility](#) for information about how they can receive their booster shot.

CDC advises that people can get both the COVID-19 vaccine and flu vaccine at the same time. Veterans receiving care at VA who wish to get a booster shot can get both shots together during the same visit.

Currently, only the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine has been authorized as a booster shot. FDA and CDC continue to review data to determine whether and when a booster might be recommended for recipients of the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson (J&J)/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine(s). VA will plan to offer boosters of these vaccines if authorized and recommended.

VA is also continuing to reach out to Veterans who have not yet been vaccinated. Even without a booster, COVID-19 vaccination offers excellent protection and makes it 10 times less likely to be hospitalized or die from COVID-19. [Monitoring Incidence of COVID-19 Cases, Hospitalizations, and Deaths, by Vaccination Status — 13 U.S. Jurisdictions, April 4–July 17, 2021 | MMWR \(cdc.gov\)](#).

Veterans who would like additional information can visit the [VA COVID-19 vaccines](#) webpage, visit their [local facility's website](#) or contact their care team. Visit [VA's Questions webpage](#) for questions and answers regarding COVID-19 vaccine.

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