

 **Last Update: Friday, March 26, 2021**
Answers within this document are based on the current information available. As the situation remains dynamic, please visit the [Government of Ontario's website](#) for the latest updates.

The following questions were those most frequently asked by residents and Members of Council from January 4th to present regarding vaccine distribution. These FAQs will be updated as new details emerge from all levels of government.

For answers to health related vaccine questions, please visit [Ottawa Public Health's COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs](#).

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Eligibility & Booking

1. Who is determining who can get a COVID-19 vaccine and when?

- a. The Government of Canada is responsible for approval and procurement of COVID-19 vaccine supply. The Government of Ontario is responsible for the distribution of these vaccines across the province. The [Ethical Framework for COVID-19 vaccine distribution](#) guides how the provincial government prioritizes and distributes vaccines across Ontario.

The City's Emergency Operations Centre and Ottawa Public Health are doing everything possible to ensure Ottawa residents who are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine will be able to access it as quickly and efficiently as possible, dependent on vaccine supply and in alignment with the provincial framework. The total amount of vaccines that will be distributed to the City of Ottawa and precise delivery dates are not yet known. These decisions are made by the Province and subject to vaccine procurement from the federal government.

For the latest information, please refer to the following web page:
Government of Ontario: [Getting a COVID-19 vaccine in Ontario](#)

2. Who is currently eligible to book an appointment to receive the COVID-19 vaccine? (*Updated)

- a. The following groups are currently eligible to book an appointment to receive a COVID-19 vaccine:
 - Residents aged 75 and over (born in or before 1946) living anywhere in Ottawa can book an appointment to receive their vaccine at a community clinic via the provincial booking system.
 - Residents aged 75 and over (born in or before 1946) or who are adult recipients of chronic home care, and who live in the following communities can book an appointment via Ottawa Public Health to receive their vaccine through a pop-up clinic:
 - Centretown West (*NEW*)
 - Britannia
 - Carleton Heights – Rideauview
 - Carlington
 - Sandy Hill
 - Whitehaven - Queensway Terrace North
 - Emerald Woods
 - Heatherington
 - Ledbury
 - Heron Gate
 - Ridgemont
 - Riverview
 - Sawmill Creek
 - Vanier South
 - Bayshore-Belltown
 - Carson Grove-Carson Meadows
 - Greenboro East
 - Hawthorne Meadows
 - Hunt Club East – Western Community
 - Hunt Club Park
 - Lowertown East
 - Manor Park
 - Overbrook-McArthur
 - Parkwood Hills
 - Sheffield Glen
 - Stewart Farm
 - Vanier North

- Residents aged 75 and over (born in or before 1946) or who are adult recipients of chronic home care, and who live in Ward 5 (West Carleton-March), Ward 19 (Cumberland), Ward 20 (Osgoode), or Ward 21 (Rideau-Goulbourn), can book appointment via Ottawa Public Health to receive their vaccine through a pop-up clinic in a rural location.
- First Nation, Inuit and Métis community members - please see [question #3](#) for eligibility and booking details.

To confirm that you are eligible for vaccination, [please visit Ottawa Public Health's COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Screening Tool](#).

Patient-facing health care workers are able to use the [COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Screening Tool](#) to check eligibility and, if applicable, pre-register for a vaccine appointment. The Province of Ontario is responsible for defining the prioritization of health care workers, as outlined in their "[COVID-19: Guidance for Prioritizing Health Care Workers for COVID-19 Vaccination](#)".

For information on the booking process, please [see question 5](#).

3. What is the vaccination booking process for Indigenous individuals?

(**Updated*)

- a. Ottawa Public Health is partnering with [Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health](#) to provide a [COVID-19 vaccination clinic](#) for First Nation, Inuit and Métis community members age 40 and over at the [St-Laurent Complex](#), located at 525 Côté Street. Call 613-691-5505 to book an appointment.

Akausivik Inuit Family Health Team is providing vaccinations for all Inuit adults. To book an appointment with Akausivik or for more information, call 613-740-0999.

You will be asked to provide proof of Indigenous identity/status. Examples include:

- Status Card
- Inuit Beneficiary Card
- Métis Card
- 60s Scoop Acceptance Letter

For additional information, visit OttawaPublicHealth.ca/IndigenousVaccine

4. How do I confirm my eligibility?

- a. To confirm that you are eligible for vaccination, [please visit Ottawa Public Health's COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Screening Tool](#). Only residents who are eligible for vaccination based on the Province of Ontario's phased approach will be able to book an appointment. Please help us keep phone lines open for those who are eligible to receive a vaccine - please do not call the booking line or 3-1-1 if you are not yet eligible.

5. I have confirmed that I meet the eligibility criteria for vaccination. How do I book an appointment? (*Updated)

- a. Eligible residents can book an appointment through the [Province of Ontario's](#) online booking system at <http://ontario.ca/bookvaccine> for a vaccine at a community clinic.

If you are 75 and older (born in 1946 or earlier) or an adult recipient of chronic home care, and you live in the high-priority communities or rural wards listed in [question 2](#), you can call Ottawa Public Health at 613-691-5505 to book an appointment at a pop-up clinic location closer to your neighbourhood. The date, time, and location will be confirmed when you make your appointment. Service providers can take your call between 7:30 am and 6 pm, Monday to Friday, and 8:30 am to 4 pm Saturday and Sunday. Service is available in multiple languages.

Walk-ins will not be accepted, so please call in advance to book your appointment if you have confirmed that you are eligible.

6. How do I book an appointment if I do not have an Ontario health card or have a red and white card?

- a. If you have confirmed that you are [eligible to receive a vaccine via the screening tool](#) but have a red and white Ontario health card, please call the Province of Ontario's Provincial Vaccine Booking Line at 1-833-943-3900 (TTY 1-866-797-0007) to book your appointment. This line is available 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week. Information is available in more than 300 languages.

If you do not have a valid health card but are eligible for a vaccine, please call Ottawa Public Health at 613-691-5505 to book an appointment.

7. I have tried calling the Ottawa Public Health COVID-19 vaccine registration line but could not get through. What should I do?

- a. We know that there is a high demand for vaccines, so a high volume of calls is expected. When calling into the booking line, callers will be put into a queue where there is the potential for long wait times. You may also select an option for a call back. Please help us keep phone lines open for those who are eligible to receive a vaccine. **Only eligible residents (see [question 2](#)) should call the COVID-19 vaccine booking phone line to make an appointment.** Appointments at community clinics should be completed via the Province. Please do not call 3-1-1 or the general Ottawa Public Health phone line, as appointments at community clinics cannot be booked on these lines.

8. When will I be eligible to get a COVID-19 vaccine, and who comes next in Ottawa?

- a. The Province has started to roll out a three-phased [vaccine distribution implementation plan](#). All groups are identified by the provincial task force using the [ethical framework for COVID-19 vaccine distribution](#).

Phase 1: high-risk population vaccination

Timing: December 2020 to March 2021 and beyond

Immediate priorities for first doses include:

- staff, essential caregivers and any residents that have not yet received a first dose in: long-term care homes, high-risk retirement homes, and First Nations elder care homes
- alternative level of care patients in hospitals who have a confirmed admission to a long-term care home, retirement home or other congregate care home for seniors
- health care workers identified as highest priority, followed by very high priority, in the [Ministry of Health's guidance on Health Care Worker Prioritization](#) (PDF)
- Indigenous adults in northern remote and higher risk communities (on-reserve and urban).

When all reasonable steps have been taken to complete first doses of the vaccine for all interested individuals in the immediate category, first doses will be available to the remainder of the Phase 1 populations. This includes:

- adults 80 years of age and older
- staff, residents and caregivers in retirement homes and other congregate care settings for seniors (for example, assisted living)
- health care workers identified as the high priority level in the [Ministry of Health's guidance on Health Care Worker Prioritization](#) (PDF)
- all Indigenous adults
- adult recipients of chronic home care

Phase 2: mass deliveries of vaccines

Timing: April to July 2021, depending on availability of vaccines

The Province of Ontario has identified the following groups as part of Phase 2 of the rollout plan:

- older adults, beginning with those 79 years of age and decreasing in five-year increments over the course of the vaccine rollout
- people who live and work in high-risk congregate settings (for example, shelters, community living)
- frontline essential workers, including first responders, education workers and the food processing industry
- individuals with high-risk chronic conditions and their caregivers
- other populations and communities facing barriers related to the determinants of health across Ontario who are at greater COVID-19 risk

The provincial task force will use the [ethical framework](#) and the best available data to identify other priority populations within this phase, based on available vaccine supply.

Phase 3: steady state

Timing: August 2021 and beyond, depending on availability of vaccines

Vaccines available widely across Ontario for anyone in the general population who wants to be immunized. The ethical framework, data and available vaccine supply will help to prioritize groups in this phase.

These timelines are subject to change subject to change and are dependent on possible additional vaccine approvals and supply. For more information on vaccine sequencing in Ottawa, please visit Ottawa Public Health's [website](#).

For the latest information, please refer to the following web page:

Government of Ontario: [Getting a COVID-19 vaccine in Ontario](#)

9. Is there an eligibility that list I need to be on to get the vaccine?

- a. At this time, there is no eligibility list for the general population. Eligibility is based on the Government of Ontario's three-phase distribution plan. The vaccine will be distributed to populations of highest priority and based on vaccine supply.

We know many people are anxious to be immunized for COVID-19, including those who are considered higher-risk or have other underlying health conditions. Please continue to follow all public health guidelines to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

As more information becomes available it will be posted to the [Province's COVID-19 vaccines for Ontario page](#).

10. How will I be notified when it's my turn to get the vaccine?

- a. Residents of all ages who are not yet eligible for the vaccine are encouraged to follow announcements on the City of Ottawa and Ottawa Public Health websites and social media channels, and from your local news media to learn when they can receive their vaccine. You can also sign up for the City of Ottawa's [COVID-19 vaccination update e-subscription](#) for regular news and updates on the vaccine roll-out.

11. I am an essential worker. When can I be vaccinated against COVID-19?

- a. Frontline essential workers, including teachers and other education staff and food processing workers are expected to be offered vaccines in Phase 2 from April to August 2021. Specific timing will depend on the availability of vaccines, and the Province of Ontario is responsible for further defining the parameters of who is considered a frontline essential worker in the coming weeks. The Provincial task force will use the ethical framework and the best available data to identify other priority populations within this phase, based on available vaccine supply.

12. My partner and I are seniors that fall into separate age categories. Will we get vaccinated at the same time? (*Updated)

- a. At this time, vaccines are only available to those eligible based on the Government of Ontario’s three-phase distribution plan. If you and your partner are both eligible, please complete two separate appointment bookings for a vaccine. If one of you is eligible and the other is not, you will only be able to book an appointment for the eligible partner.

As more information becomes available it will be posted to the [Province’s COVID-19 vaccines for Ontario page](#).

13. I am concerned that I am more at risk for COVID-19 due to a medical condition. When will I be able to receive the vaccine?

- a. Vaccine eligibility is based on the Government of Ontario’s three-phase distribution plan. Individuals with high-risk chronic conditions and their caregivers currently are part of Phase 2 of this plan.

On March 5, 2020, the Province of Ontario identified that individuals with the health conditions listed below will be vaccinated in order of risk, with the highest-risk individuals being vaccinated first, followed by high-risk and at-risk individuals.

Highest-risk	High-risk	At-risk
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organ transplant recipients • Hematopoietic stem cell transplant recipients • People with neurological diseases in which respiratory function may be compromised (e.g., motor neuron disease, myasthenia gravis, multiple sclerosis) • Haematological malignancy diagnosed less than 1 year ago • Kidney disease eGFR < 30 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obesity (BMI > 40) • Other treatments causing immunosuppression (e.g., chemotherapy, immunity-weakening medications) • Intellectual or developmental disabilities (e.g., Down Syndrome) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immune deficiencies / autoimmune disorders • Stroke / cerebrovascular disease • Dementia • Diabetes • Liver disease • All other cancers • Respiratory diseases • Spleen problems • Heart disease • Hypertension with end organ damage • Diagnosis of mental disorder • Substance use disorders • Thalassemia • Pregnancy • Immunocompromising health conditions • Other disabilities requiring direct support care in the community

For more details, please visit The Government of Ontario’s page: [“Populations Eligible for Phase Two COVID-19 Vaccination”](#)

14. I am a health-care worker. How do I pre-register for a vaccine? (*Updated)

- a. Patient-facing health care workers are able to use the [COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Screening Tool](#) to check eligibility and, if applicable, pre-register for a vaccine appointment. The Province of Ontario is responsible for defining the prioritization of health care workers, as outlined in their "[COVID-19: Guidance for Prioritizing Health Care Workers for COVID-19 Vaccination](#)".

15. What do I do if when I enter my postal code into the provincial booking system to book an appointment at a community clinic, I receive an error?

- a. If you do not have one or live in a recently built neighbourhood, the Province of Ontario has directed clients to use the postal code of a shelter, library, or other community space in your area.

16. How do I cancel or reschedule my vaccine appointment?

- a. If you scheduled an appointment through the provincial online vaccine booking system, you can reschedule or cancel:
 - Online – go to the confirmation email you got when you booked and follow the instructions
 - By calling the Provincial Vaccine Booking Line at 1-833-943-3900 (TTY 1-866-797-0007)

You will need the following:

- Your health card (information on front and back)
- Your postal code

If you booked your appointment with Ottawa Public Health directly, please call 613-691-5505 to reschedule.

If you booked through The Ottawa Hospital, please email vaccines@toh.ca with any cancellations or appointment change requests.

Vaccine Distribution, Logistics & Planning

17. Where will I be able to get vaccinated against COVID-19?

- a. Various strategies will be used to distribute and administer vaccines across Ottawa, based on the quantity and type of vaccines received throughout 2021. The primary locations and strategies will include hospital clinics, community clinics, pharmacies, mobile vaccination teams, primary health care providers like family doctors and by other health care professionals such as nurses working in congregate living settings, including long-term care homes and shelters.

18. Where will the community clinics be located?

- a. The City of Ottawa has identified the following locations for community clinics to administer vaccines:
 - Ottawa City Hall, 110 Laurier Avenue W.
 - Horticulture Building, 1525 Princess Patricia Way

- Eva James Memorial Centre, 65 Stonehaven Drive
- Ruddy Family YMCA-YWCA, 265 Centrum Boulevard
- Nepean Sportsplex, 1701 Woodroffe Avenue
- Canterbury Recreation Complex, 2185 Arch Street
- St-Laurent Complex, 525 Coté Street

In addition to community clinics, pop-up clinics will also be set up at select sites for multiple days but are not permanent. They will be located in neighbourhoods experiencing higher rates of COVID-19 transmission.

19. When will the community clinics open?

- a. Community clinics are opening incrementally, dependant on vaccine supply. The following community clinics are currently open for those eligible to receive a vaccine that have booked an appointment:
 - Nepean Sportsplex, 1701 Woodroffe Avenue
 - Ruddy Family YMCA-YWCA, 265 Centrum Boulevard
 - Eva James Memorial Centre, 65 Stonehaven Drive
 - Ottawa City Hall, 110 Laurier Avenue W.

Timelines for opening all community clinics will depend on vaccine supply and the remaining community clinics will be opened as supply increases. Once fully operational, these community clinics will operate from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., seven days a week and have the capacity to administer a total of nearly 11,000 immunizations per day.

20. What transportation options are available to those eligible to receive a vaccine?

- a. Residents who are eligible for vaccination are encouraged to make a transportation plan in advance of their appointment. This could include asking a family member or caregiver to provide you with a ride to your designated clinic. It could also include booking a ride with [Para Transpo](#) if you use this service. Para Transpo clients should use the Para Transpo COVID-19 Vaccination Trip Reservation telephone line at 613-842-3600. We ask customers to schedule their COVID-19 vaccination appointment with OPH **before** booking a trip on Para Transpo.

If a transportation option is not available to you, you can request a ride to and from the clinic through [Ottawa Community Transportation](#) after you have booked your appointment. [Ottawa Community Transportation](#) will contact you directly.

If you or someone you know require transportation but do not have online access, please contact 211 and they will help complete the transportation request form on your behalf. Please have your vaccine booking confirmation number available when calling. COVID-19 protocols are in place to ensure the safety of the rider and the driver, and wearing a mask is mandatory.

21. Do the various vaccine locations meet accessibility standards?

- a. Yes - the COVID-19 community vaccination clinic locations in Ottawa were selected with accessibility in mind. All sites are wheelchair accessible and are all equipped with a limited number of wheelchairs for those in need. However, due to limited availability, we are asking for those who can to bring their own.

Staff will be on hand at the clinics to assist residents who arrive for their vaccinations. Clients who need assistance will be allowed one support person to accompany them into the vaccination clinic.

22. Will there be pop-up clinics for people who live in rural or remote areas?

(**Updated*)

- a. Yes - in addition to community clinics, pop-up clinics have been set-up to reach targeted populations in rural areas. If you are age 75 or over (born in or before 1946) or an adult recipient of chronic home care, and you live in a rural community, you will be able to book your appointment at a pop-up clinic starting today. Rural clinics will be available at the following locations:

- Greely Community Centre
- Navan Memorial Centre
- Osgoode Community Centre
- R.J. Kennedy Memorial Centre
- Richmond Memorial Arena and Community Centre
- West Carleton Community Complex

If you live in Ward 5 (West Carleton-March), Ward 19 (Cumberland), Ward 20 (Osgoode), or Ward 21 (Rideau-Goulbourn), please call 613-691-5505 to confirm your eligibility and book an appointment.

23. Is parking available at the community clinics?

- a. Parking options are available at each of the community clinic locations, and parking at City Hall is complimentary for those with an appointment. Please select one of the following community clinics to view a map with information on parking, route access, and nearby transit routes:

- [Ottawa City Hall, 110 Laurier Avenue W.](#)
- [Eva James Memorial Centre, 65 Stonehaven Drive](#)
- [Ruddy Family YMCA-YWCA, 265 Centrum Boulevard](#)
- [Nepean Sportsplex, 1701 Woodroffe Avenue](#)

24. Am I able to bring a support person with me to my appointment?

- a. Staff will be on hand at the clinics to assist residents who arrive for their vaccinations. Clients who need assistance will be allowed one support person to accompany them into the vaccination clinic.

25. Why is the AstraZeneca vaccine not yet available at pharmacies in Ottawa?

*(New)

- a. The Province of Ontario is responsible for determining the prioritization and distribution of vaccines, based on procurement from the Government of Canada. The Province has noted that pharmacies and primary care partners in additional regions will be provided vaccines over the coming weeks and plans for the distribution of the AstraZeneca vaccine locally are currently being discussed. In the meantime, please continue to visit ottawa.ca and ottawapublichealth.ca for the latest information and updates.

Vaccine Information & Safety

26. Is getting the COVID-19 vaccine voluntary?

- a. Yes. COVID-19 vaccines will not be mandatory, but you are strongly encouraged to get vaccinated.

27. How do I decide if vaccination is the right choice for me and my family?

- a. Feeling worried or hesitant is completely normal when something is new. Vaccination is a personal choice, and one that most Canadians agree is an important part of maintaining good health and for disease prevention.

28. Why should I get vaccinated against COVID-19?

- a. Vaccination is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread and reduce the impact of infectious diseases. Safe and effective vaccines for COVID-19 are becoming available to protect us against COVID-19. While many people infected with COVID-19 experience only mild illness, others may get a severe illness or even die. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you, even if you are not considered to be at increased risk of severe complications. COVID-19 vaccination helps protect you by creating an antibody response without having to experience the illness itself.

29. What is the current status on dosing intervals and timing?

- a. The Province of Ontario recently extended the interval between the first and second dose of vaccines. The second dose can now be provided up to 16 weeks after the first dose. Exemptions for this change include the following groups, who will continue to receive vaccine at the initial intervals as described in the product monographs:
 - Residents of long-term care homes, retirement homes, Elder Care Lodges and Assisted Living facilities who are at the greatest risk of both exposure to COVID-19 and serious illness and death.

30. Will people have the choice of which COVID-19 vaccine they receive?

- a. All four vaccines approved for use in Canada are safe and effective. They all reduce the risk of serious illness, hospitalization, and death, and will help with the control of COVID-19 in the community. The vaccine that you will be offered will depend on:

- Supply
- Availability at the time
- Storage requirement
- Your age

You may decline the vaccine product that you are offered; you will not be able to select between vaccine products.

Persons with allergies to a vaccine, or a specific component of a vaccine must consult a physician to determine if vaccination is still possible, and if so, with what vaccine.

Other Questions

31. How many people have been vaccinated for COVID-19 in Ottawa?

- a. For the latest information on COVID-19 data, including local vaccination statistics, please visit [Ottawa Public Health's Daily COVID-19 Dashboard](#).

32. How are we engaging the community and specific groups like Indigenous, seniors, racialized communities?

- a. Ottawa Public Health has established a local Vaccine Sequence Strategy Task Force to advise the City's Emergency Operations Centre on how to implement the sequence of vaccines given local context, including maximizing uptake among groups sequenced ahead of others. This Task Force includes representation from groups highly affected by COVID-19, such as newcomers, Indigenous, racialized people, older adults, and healthcare workers. The Vaccine Sequencing Task Force relies on the framework established by the Province of Ontario.

33. What can I do now and how can I help?

- a. It will be several months until a vaccine is available to the general public. In the meantime, it is essential that we all continue to do our part to reduce transmission of COVID-19 in the community: limit your close contacts to those within your household, practice physical distancing, wear a mask, wash your hands, stay home except for essential reasons and follow local and provincial guidance.

Until vaccines are widely available, it remains important to take steps to protect yourself, your loved ones and our community against COVID-19. Learn more about things you can do to reduce virus spread by following OPH on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram. To keep up-to-date with the latest information, follow "[COVID Decoded](#)" with Dr. Trevor Arnason, on OPH's YouTube channel.

34. What mental health resources are available to those feeling anxious about vaccine availability?

- a. The COVID-19 situation can be very stressful. It is OK to not be OK.

If you are in crisis, please contact the [**Mental Health Crisis Line**](#) (24 hours a day/7 days a week) at 613-722-6914 or if outside Ottawa toll-free at 1-866-996-0991.

Please visit Ottawa Public Health's [**Mental Health and COVID-19**](#) page for an extensive list of resources, including a printable version of a [**Mental Health and COVID-19 Resource List**](#).

More information & Links

- [**Ottawa Public Health – COVID-19 Vaccine**](#)
- [**Vaccines Work- Myths about vaccines**](#)
- [**COVID-19 vaccines for Ontario**](#)
- [**COVID-19 vaccine safety**](#)
- [**Getting a COVID-19 vaccine in Ontario**](#)