

COVID-19 Vaccine Guidance

Transporting Vaccine to Homebound Ohioans

COVID-19 vaccine providers face a challenge in safely transporting the COVID-19 vaccine and maintaining complex cold-chain and storage requirements for the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine products in order to vaccinate Ohioans who are homebound.

In cases when a vaccine recipient cannot leave their home to receive the vaccine, providers can make arrangements to administer vaccinations in the home by strictly following guidance outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and ensuring staff are trained on the storage, handling and transportation guidelines.

The [CDC guidelines](#) below outline the appropriate vaccine storage, handling, and administration considerations to ensure safe and effective vaccination to this unique population. This guidance will be updated when additional information is obtained and when new COVID-19 vaccines become available.

Planning recommendations

Providers vaccinating homebound individuals should carefully plan to prevent vaccine wastage and ensure safe and effective vaccination.

- Estimate the number of doses needed as accurately as possible. Contact recipients or their caregivers in advance to determine how many doses will be needed. Plan to use all doses in a vial transported for home vaccination to minimize wasting vaccine doses, such as having contingency plans for vaccination of caregivers, or other persons in the home to avoid vaccine wastage.
- Map out travel plans to ensure vaccine is utilized within the approved time frames for use of vaccine at different temperatures, including factoring in pre-vaccination preparation time, and post-vaccination observation time.
- Be prepared to maintain, monitor, and report temperature of vaccine from the time the vaccine is taken out of a clinic facility, during transportation, and up to the time that vaccine is administered.

Transportation guidelines

[Comprehensive guidance for vaccine movement](#) are available on the [COVID-19 Vaccine Provider page](#). The guidance below should be followed in addition to all protocols listed on that page.

- Follow specific temperature guidelines for each COVID-19 vaccine per manufacturer.
- Transport vaccine using a portable vaccine refrigerator or qualified container and pack-out (a type of container and supplies specifically designed for use when packing vaccines for transport). Soft-sided containers specifically engineered for vaccine transport are also acceptable. Maintain temperatures of 2 degrees Celsius to 8 degrees Celsius (36 degrees Fahrenheit to 46 degrees Fahrenheit) for the duration of transport.
- A digital data logger [device](#) must be used to [monitor the temperature of the vaccine](#). Place the probe near the vaccine.

- A digital data logger with an external readout that can read minimum and maximum (min/max) temperatures is preferred.
- This type of temperature monitoring device allows the temperature of the vaccine to be checked without frequently opening the transport container.
- [Document](#) the min/max temperatures when transport begins, every time the container is opened, and upon return to the facility.
 - Each temperature reading should be documented on a [temperature log](#).
- **A punctured vial may be transported from one home to another by the same health care professional if the cold chain is properly maintained.** However, a partially used vial cannot be transferred from one provider to another, or across state lines. Time must be noted when the vial was first punctured, and the six-hour viability window begins.
 - Place punctured vials into a container with dunnage to:
 - Prevent movement.
 - Prevent breakage.
 - Prevent re-freezing.
 - Keep punctured vials upright.
 - The container of vial(s) may then be placed into an approved insulated container qualified to maintain temperatures of 2 C to 8 C (36 F to 46 F) for the duration of transport.
- Additional transport guidance:
 - If using a company or personal vehicle, only transport vaccines inside the passenger compartment (not in the trunk or bed of a truck, which may be too hot or too cold).
 - Move transport containers directly to a vehicle that is already at a comfortable temperature – neither too hot nor too cold.
 - Keep containers out of direct sunlight.
 - **Never leave the container unattended in the vehicle.**
 - The COVID-19 vaccination provider should have at least three doses of epinephrine and two doses of diphenhydramine on hand when administering COVID-19 vaccine.
 - To prevent wasting vaccine doses, as appropriate and approved by jurisdictions, healthcare personnel may administer vaccine to caretakers and family members, given their high risk of exposure.
 - Plan and schedule the home visits.
 - Have cell phone available to contact EMS if needs arise.
 - COVID-19 vaccination providers must document vaccine administration into [ImpactSIIS](#) within 24 hours of administration.

Predrawn Syringes

The CDC recommends transporting vaccine in vials. However, there may be instances when the only option is to transport vaccine in a pre-drawn syringe. U.S. Pharmacopeia includes guidance for transporting pre-drawn vaccine in syringes in the [COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit: Operational Considerations for Healthcare Practitioners](#). The same guidelines for transport of open vials must be followed and include:

- Pre-drawn syringes must be carefully placed into a container with dunnage.
 - Prevent movement.
 - Prevent dispensing of COVID-19 vaccine.
 - Prevent re-freezing.
 - Time must be noted on when vaccine was drawn for window of vaccine viability. Transit time must be included.
 - Keep out of sunlight.
- Prior to administration, syringes need to be inspected for proper dosage per manufacturer.

Questions and resources for vaccine providers

COVID 19 Vaccines	Pfizer-BioNTech	Moderna
<i>The CDC is a resource for comprehensive information on COVID-19 Vaccine Manufacturers</i>	Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine	Comprehensive information on the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine
<i>Overview of storage, handling, and preparation for vaccine administration</i>	S.T.E.P.S. to Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccination	Moderna Vaccine Preparation and Administration Summary
<i>Additional Manufacturer materials</i>	cvdvaccine-us.com	Moderna Clinical Website

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For more information on COVID-19, please visit coronavirus.ohio.gov

For questions, please call the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Call Center between 8 a.m. – 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, at 1-844-9ODHVAX (1-844-963-4829) or email COVIDVACCINE@odh.ohio.gov.

You also may visit the ODH [COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Information Training page](#) for additional information and resources.