

COVID-19 Vaccine Providers Vaccine Management Solution Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

The Ohio Vaccine Management Solution (VMS) offered by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) is designed to help streamline the vaccine administration process for providers to free more time for patient care. This no-cost, state-supported tool can assist providers with patient registration and scheduling, and vaccine inventory and clinic management. The VMS will be available for the public soon at gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov. Here are frequently asked questions about the VMS from enrolled vaccine providers, and those answers.

Program basics

Q: Does Ohio offer a streamlined tool for COVID-19 vaccine availability and appointment scheduling?

A: Yes. The VMS is a new, state-supported, no-cost, web-based service that allows Ohioans to quickly determine whether they are [currently eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccines](#), or sign up to receive future alerts when they become eligible. When eligible, Ohioans can use this resource to set up an appointment with a nearby provider, prepare for that appointment, and receive text message or email reminders.

Q: What is the difference between the VMS and the Vaccine Provider Location search?

A: The [Vaccine Provider Location search](#) is a separate listing that shows all enrolled COVID-19 vaccine providers who have been allocated vaccine, and provides contact information such as address, website, and phone number, so Ohioans can reach out to a provider. However, the Vaccine Provider Location search does not list appointment availability or offer direct scheduling. The [VMS](#) is an all-in-one tool that allows members of the public to determine eligibility, see providers in their area who have appointments available, sign up for alerts, and more.

Q: When and how can providers access the VMS?

A: The VMS will become available to enrolled vaccine providers beginning the week of Feb. 8, 2021. Providers will be granted access to the VMS, staggered in groups. Providers will receive an activation link from noreply@gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov. Once the account is activated, providers can access the system to complete training and setup. **The launch date for the public is forthcoming.** Ohioans can access this website on a smartphone, computer, or tablet once their account is activated. No downloads are needed.

Q: Is there a cost to sign up for the VMS?

A: There is no cost to use the VMS.

Q: Is this system web-based or will it require an app download?

A: The VMS is a web-based service accessible on a computer, tablet or smartphone. No apps or downloads are required.

Q: Does the system offer mobile device viewing optimization?

A: Yes, the VMS is web-based and optimized for mobile use.

Q: Are vaccine providers required to use the VMS? What if we already have a good scheduling platform that we like?

A: We must ensure all Ohioans have an opportunity to receive vaccine as it becomes available, and to simplify that process as much as possible for vaccine recipients. The demand for COVID-19 vaccine greatly exceeds availability, and some Ohioans have shared challenges finding a vaccine provider and available appointments. The VMS will give Ohioans a streamlined scheduling experience, eliminating the need to make numerous phone calls or website visits. The number of participating providers maximizes this solution, therefore all providers are [strongly encouraged](#) to evaluate the benefits of the VMS, and [choose to participate](#). This state-supported, no-cost tool will help vaccine providers register patients, schedule appointments, and manage clinics, allowing providers to focus on the critical task of vaccine administration to Ohio's priority populations.

Q: Will our vaccine allocation be affected if we do not use the system?

A: Weekly vaccine allocations are not directly linked to the use of this system. However, vaccine use recorded in VMS may eventually inform future allocation.

Q: What are the benefits of this system for members of the public who want to get the vaccine?

A: The VMS is a one-stop resource that offers the following key benefits for Ohioans who are interested in receiving the vaccine:

- The VMS tool allows Ohioans to quickly determine if they are eligible for vaccine.
 - Individuals uncertain if they are in a group currently eligible for the vaccine can find out using this tool.
 - Those who aren't yet eligible can sign up to receive email and/or text updates about Ohio's phases to be alerted when they do become eligible.
- The VMS tool allows patients to easily find available vaccine, schedule appointments, and access care.
 - Once determined to be eligible, Ohioans can use the tool to find providers near them who have vaccine inventory and available appointments.
 - Ohioans can use the tool to receive updates about the second dose if being vaccinated with a two-dose regimen.
 - Ohioans can use the tool to provide important screening information to the provider to help save time at their appointments.

Q: What are the benefits for vaccine providers?

The VMS offers the following key benefits for vaccine providers:

- The primary objective is to remove the burden from vaccine providers to allow staff more time to focus on patient care.
- The Ohio VMS is a state-supported solution at no cost to vaccine providers.
- This solution offers vaccine providers a consistent approach to scheduling vaccinations.
- The VMS tool allows providers to keep track of vaccine and inform the public about availability.
- Providers can enter information to help keep track of vaccine doses and ensure patients receive booster shots.
- Providers enter information about vaccine and appointment availability, providing this information to the public to allow for direct scheduling. This means fewer phone calls to the clinic so staff can concentrate on delivering vaccine. Providers can also enter appointments as needed.
- The tool gives providers access to pre-appointment health information, when available, and allows providers to record post-appointment details about side effects or adverse reactions, if applicable.
- Training and support are available.
- Providers can use the VMS tool to interact with patients and schedule appointments.
- The Ohio VMS integrates with [ImpactSIIS](#), Ohio's statewide immunization information system database, and will push data to ImpactSIIS every 24 hours, streamlining the state data entry process.

Q: How high of a load test will be completed on the site to know its limits? Will the site crash or run too slowly for functionality during a large clinic?

A: The system is designed to handle up to 1 million Ohio residents hitting the system per hour. Extensive performance testing has been completed to confirm capacity. We will be monitoring performance, but we do not foresee performance load as an issue.

Public access and features

Q: What if the person registering doesn't have a cell phone for the security code to be sent to?

A: The security code can also be sent by email directly to the person registering or someone registering on their behalf.

Q: Is there a workaround for seniors who may not have a cell phone or email?

A: The VMS provides the capability for someone to submit an application on behalf of someone else. This helper could enter their own email address and/or cell phone number to receive email and SMS updates on behalf of the vaccine recipient, if desired.

Q: Does VMS send text reminders about appointments to patients?

A: Yes, it sends a reminder 24 hours in advance of the appointment.

Q: Will a resident be limited to get vaccine in the county in which they live?

A: The system does not limit the providers a resident can choose. Providers should continue to use their current processes for validating eligibility, including county of residence. We are looking into adding information on the screen that advises residents to choose a provider in their county.

Enrollment

Q: How can vaccine providers enroll to use the VMS?

A: All enrolled providers will receive an email from noreply@gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov with information about how to enroll in VMS. Those activation emails will be sent on a staggered schedule beginning Feb. 8. Follow the instructions provided in the email to activate your free account. Any provider that did not receive that email should request a resend by emailing COVIDVACCINE@odh.ohio.gov.

Q: I'm an enrolled vaccine provider but am not receiving shipments yet. Should we sign up now or wait?

A: Providers who are enrolled but have not yet received vaccine supply are encouraged to set up their VMS Provider Portal. This will allow providers to become familiar with the system and begin using it immediately upon notification of a vaccine allocation. As vaccine supply increases, more enrolled vaccine providers will begin receiving shipments.

Training

Q: How can we get training on how to use the VMS?

A: The following training resources are available to help providers navigate the VMS tool. The [Vaccine Management Solution \(VMS\) Training page](#) offers a series of videos and a user guide with step-by-step instructions for setting up your Provider Portal and using VMS.

Training Videos

- [Introduction to the Vaccine Management Solution \(VMS\)](#): Brief introduction to the VMS system.
- [Patient Check-in](#): How to find a patient record and begin the vaccine administration check-in process.
- [How to Manage Staff](#): How to add, delete, and edit staff access in the Vaccine Management Solution.
- [How to Manage Your Location's Appointment Availability](#): How to create and maintain appointments in the Vaccine Management Solution.
- [How to Manage Available Inventory](#): How to track inventory in the Provider Portal.

User Guide

- [Ohio VMS User Guide](#): This training resource offers step-by-step instructions on different aspects of the VMS, including:
 - Managing vaccine inventory.
 - Entering appointment availability for the public to see.
 - Managing vaccine administration locations staff users.

Provider logistics

Q: Is VMS customizable? Can we require more information for our appointments or add questions via our Provider Portal?

A: The questionnaire is standard, currently. Adding additional questions can be reviewed and prioritized for a future release, if necessary.

Q: Will each health district or provider be able to logo their portal access?

A: This feature is not currently available.

Q: Will there be a link to the vaccine emergency use authorization (EUA) forms?

A: The system does not currently link directly to the EUA forms, but this could be implemented in the future. We will track this request so it can be reviewed and prioritized.

Q: Will the patient demographic information be editable if someone misspells information?

A: Yes, certain patient demographic information can be modified in the Provider Portal.

Q: Will an individual's address be validated to ensure they are actually in our service area?

A: Providers should continue to use their current processes for validating eligibility, including county of residence. We are looking into adding information on the screen that advises residents to choose a provider in their county.

Q: How does VMS link to our information work if we are not going to use the VMS fully?

A: Provider organizations that will not be using the VMS fully can still be displayed for Ohio residents when they are searching for vaccination appointment locations. A hyperlink to these providers' registration sites will be displayed in the VMS so a resident can access that site and book an appointment in the external system. Providers using external systems can access VMS to turn on their record if they would like to show up in a resident's search result, and to turn it off when they do not want to be included in the search results.

Q: Will each pharmacist need login credentials, or will this be by location?

A: This is set up by location, and each location can have administrators who can make changes. Each pharmacy location can have two

administrators with login credentials per location.

Q: Do we have any control over people who put in incorrect information to become eligible? How will we ensure accuracy in eligibility?

A: Residents will be instructed to provide verification of eligibility at time of vaccination, including identity, age, medical condition, occupation, etc. in the appointment confirmation email they receive from the VMS. The VMS does not control or have the ability to prevent residents from entering incorrect information to become eligible. Residents are asked to certify their understanding that their responses to the eligibility screening questionnaire will be used to determine their vaccine eligibility before submitting their responses in the VMS.

Inventory management

Q: How can we view or add our vaccine inventory to VMS?

A: After you have received a shipment, log into VMS to complete the following steps outlined in the following training resources:

- **Video:** [How to Manage Available Inventory](#): How to track inventory in the Provider Portal.
- **[Ohio VMS User Guide](#):** This training resource offers step-by-step instructions on different aspects of the VMS, including managing vaccine inventory.

Communication

Q: What's the best way to share information about the VMS with our patients or people who call us directly seeking an appointment?

A: ODH is developing a toolkit with talking points, language tips, and social media language to help you communicate about the VMS tool to your patients, vaccine recipients and staff. The toolkit will be shared with providers soon. If you are using VMS, please direct them to the system at gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov once available.

Q: Any advice for those who have individuals on waitlists and how to address the new system to them and not have them be upset?

A: We can arrange a meeting to better understand how we can support providers with individuals on a waitlist. Please send system requests to our team using the email COVIDVACCINE@odh.ohio.gov.

System integration

Q: Will this link to ImpactSIIS?

A: Yes. The Ohio VMS integrates with ImpactSIIS, Ohio's statewide immunization information system database, and will push data to ImpactSIIS every 24 hours, streamlining the state data entry process.

Q: Can this integrate with hospital patient portals?

A: We are exploring the possibility of integrating VMS with hospital patient portals. This functionality is still under development.

Q: If we document the vaccine information in this new portal, will we also have to put it in ImpactSIIS?

A: No, you will only have to enter that data once into VMS. There will be a data push to Impact SIIS every 24 hours.

Q: Can this information be shared with our electronic medical records or would we need to enter this information into two systems?

A: The VMS system can be configured to share information with an EMR. However, this is not currently enabled. We can discuss this further with providers if there is interest in adding this capability. Please send system requests to our team using the email COVIDVACCINE@odh.ohio.gov.

Q: Will we be able to import our current registration lists into this system?

A: This is possible, but we would need to discuss this further on a case-by-case basis to confirm the need and requirements. We can arrange a meeting to confirm how we can support your specific needs. Please send system requests to our team using the email COVIDVACCINE@odh.ohio.gov.

Q: What kind of options would we have to import our current data?

A: Several integrations are possible, but we would need to discuss this further to confirm the need and requirements. We can arrange a meeting to confirm how we can support you. Please send system requests to our team using the email COVIDVACCINE@odh.ohio.gov.

Q: If we have a legacy vaccination system, will we be able to backload to our own system for future knowledge and record-keeping? Or are we limited to ImpactSIIS for our future knowledge?

A: We would need to discuss this further to confirm the need and requirements. We can arrange a meeting to confirm how we can support you. Please send system requests to our team using the email COVIDVACCINE@odh.ohio.gov.

Q: Will the VMS also pull data from a local health department's inventory and provide vaccine administration data for ImpactSIIS?

A: More inventory functionality is under development.

Q: Will the VMS Provider Portal interface with [Vaccine Finder](#) for site availability ?

A: This functionality is not available at this time.

Appointments and scheduling

Q: Is there a limit to the number of appointments per time slot on the schedule?

A: The number of appointments is fully configurable.

Q: How do the facilities manage their appointments? Will we be able to customize appointment slots based on staffing availability?

A: Providers can manage their own clinics based on allocation. VMS offers flexibility in assigning appointment availability, including specific hours, appointment length, and the number of appointments per time slot. Hours can vary from day to day and week to week.

Q: Can one individual have access to multiple sites for adding provider times rather than just one site?

A: Yes, if that person is registered as the contact for multiple sites, they can enter provider times for each location.

Q: Can the provider enter an appointment for an individual if they call in and having difficulty?

A: Yes, providers can enter an appointment for an individual using the same portal the individual would use themselves (gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov). A shortcut to this site is also available in the VMS Provider Portal.

Q: Does this system allow people to schedule doses utilizing a call center?

A: ODH is working with several other agencies, such as the Department of Aging, to offer assistance in scheduling appointments. We will share more information once available at coronavirus.ohio.gov. Vaccine providers can assist the public in scheduling appointments using VMS. Providers can enter an appointment for an individual using the same portal the individual would use themselves (gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov). A shortcut to this site is also available in the VMS Provider Portal.

Q: What about individuals who do not have internet access, email, or cell phones? How can they schedule appointments?

A: The VMS provides the capability for someone to submit an application on behalf of someone else. This helper could enter their own email address and/or cell phone number to receive email and SMS updates on behalf of the vaccine recipient, if desired. Vaccine providers also can assist the public in scheduling appointments using VMS. Providers can enter an appointment for an individual using the same portal the individual would use themselves (gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov). A shortcut to this site is also available in the VMS Provider Portal.

Q: Will the system say if the vaccination is for a first or second dose and where they received first dose?

A: Yes, the system will distinguish between a patient's first vs. second dose appointment. This system is intended for use for patients just beginning their vaccinations. Those who have already received their first dose without using the VMS system should receive their second dose from the same provider where their first dose was administered. If that appointment was not scheduled at their first appointment, the patient should be instructed to call to schedule that appointment with their first-dose provider.

Q: Can you allow a walk-in appointment versus a scheduled one?

A: Providers can book appointments on behalf of a walk-in by accessing the eligibility screening and booking tool at gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov, completing the screening questions with the resident, and then booking an appointment at their location for the current time (or at the resident's desired appointment time). A shortcut to the eligibility and booking tool is displayed on the home page of the Provider Portal.

Q: Is there a way for us to enter patients that have already had appointments scheduled with us?

A: The VMS is designed for scheduling newly available appointments.

Q: Will this allow for waiting lists rather than specific appointment scheduling?

A: Currently the functionality is for specific clinics and appointments. The VMS does collect demographic information from residents who complete the screening tool and are not currently eligible, as well as their email address and/or phone number. The demographic information collected includes age range, occupation, ethnicity, race, ZIP code, etc., and will be used to assess when a resident may become eligible for the vaccine. Outreach can be made to inform specific population segments when they may be eligible. A full waitlist functionality where a specific name is placed on a waitlist is not currently available.

Q: Is there a way to make a clinic private or to limit sign up?

A: No. At this time, there is not functionality to limit or restrict the clinic to certain populations.

Q: We are working with two other vaccine providers in our county holding large clinics weekly. We are combining staff and doses. Can we utilize this system? We currently have a waiting list of more than 2,000 patients. How would we schedule them ourselves?

A: Yes, you can use the VMS. Providers with special cases like this should request assistance from us by sending an email to COVIDVACCINE@odh.ohio.gov so we can set up a meeting to discuss the best process. One of the provider locations could list the allocations and available appointments, using gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov to book an appointment on behalf of a resident. As long as the resident has provided an email address and/or mobile phone number, when a provider books an appointment on behalf of a resident, the resident will receive a booking confirmation email and/or SMS and an email to access their VMS Resident Portal account. We would need to discuss the best process to ensure accurate reporting through ImpactSISS.

Q: Can they get appointment for second dose at same time scheduling the first dose?

A: Patients are asked to book one appointment for vaccination at a time. The ideal scenario is that providers support a patient in booking their second appointment while they are at their first-dose appointment, ensuring immediate booking and minimizing the risk of the patient not booking their second appointment. However, if not possible to book the second appointment at the time of the first, a patient can use the VMS to complete the screening process again to book a second appointment, either when booking their first appointment, or after receiving their first dose.

Q: Does the client schedule their second dose, or can that be done at the time of the first dose clinic by the provider?

A: The client can schedule their second dose, but ideally, a provider will support the client in scheduling their second dose at the time of the first dose to ensure the proper vaccine product and interval.

Q: If someone tries to reschedule second appointment, can the VMS show what days we are administering which vaccine?

A: If a patient needs to reschedule their second appointment, we recommend a provider staff member rebook the second appointment using gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov to ensure they get the right vaccine product at the correct interval.

Q: Does VMS send automatic reminders for second doses?

A: The system does not currently send automatic reminders to book an appointment for second doses; however, this can be implemented in the future. We will track this request so it can be reviewed and prioritized. Once an appointment is booked, the system sends an appointment reminder 24 hours before the appointment time; this applies to both the first and second dose.

Q: Will a patient be denied by the portal system if they are not a priority group, but were called in as a backup to use any leftover doses?

A: [ODH advises that excess doses](#) be given to currently eligible priority populations, except in rare circumstances. Because this is allowed in rare circumstances, future functionality may include the option for providers to enter special circumstances such as these.

Q: There is a concern that individuals will think they are scheduling through the actual local health department and not a system and may cause some confusion. What is the plan to address this?

A: Because the systems are integrated, individuals scheduling through VMS are, in fact, scheduling with the LHD through a vaccination event created and managed by the LHD provider. Anything scheduled through the VMS is accessible and can be managed by the provider.

Q: Because of the way the individual registers, are they prevented from making multiple appointments?

A: There is currently no functionality to prevent multiple appointments. Providers should review appointment schedules for duplication and contact that patient if changes are necessary.

Clinic administration

Q: Can VMS be used for clinical documentation during appointments and clinics? Will it integrate to the state reporting system?

A: Yes, staff administering vaccines can enter data during the vaccination, which will automatically push to ImpactSIIS in 24 hours.

Q: Would we need to have a laptop at each nurse's station to document at time of administration?

A: It would be ideal to have a laptop at each nurse's station to document vaccination details at time of administration.

Technical support

Q: Who do we call if we are having issues using the VMS?

A: Vaccine providers who have questions after viewing the videos and reading the user guide should contact the ODH COVID-19 Provider Call Center at 1-844-9ODHVAX (1-844-963-4829), or email COVIDVACCINE@odh.ohio.gov.

Created Feb. 8, 2021.

For [frequently asked questions about enrolling as a COVID-19 vaccine provider](#), visit the Ohio COVID-19 Provider Enrollment page at coronavirus.ohio.gov.

If you have any questions, please call the ODH Provider Call Center between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, and between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at 1-844-9ODHVAX (1-844-963-4829), or email COVIDVACCINE@odh.ohio.gov.