

## News From the Delaware Division of Public Health of Public Health

### COVID-19 VACCINE BOOSTERS NOW AVAILABLE FOR DELAWAREANS 12 AND OLDER

**DOVER, DE (JAN. 6, 2022)** – The Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) today announced that Delaware’s vaccine providers can now begin administering booster doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine to individuals ages 12 to 15 who completed their initial Pfizer vaccine series at least five months ago.

Today’s announcement comes after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) gave its approval Monday to expand Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) to allow for the Pfizer booster to be administered to this age group. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) met Wednesday and agreed with the FDA findings. CDC Director Dr. Rochelle P. Walensky endorsed the advisory committee’s recommendations later that evening.

Earlier this week the CDC also shortened the booster interval from 6 months to 5 months for people who received the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. This means that people can now receive an mRNA booster shot 5 months after completing their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series. The booster interval recommendation for people who received the J&J vaccine (2 months) or the Moderna vaccine (6 months), has not changed. Individuals younger than 18 are only able to receive the Pfizer vaccine, and are not able to mix and match vaccine brands for their booster as those individuals 18 and older can do.

[Data](#) show that COVID-19 boosters help broaden and strengthen protection against Omicron and other SARS-CoV-2 variants. The FDA and CDC reviewed real-world data from Israel, including safety data from more than 6,300 individuals 12 through 15 years of age who received a booster dose of the vaccine. The data show there are no new safety concerns following a booster in this population. There were no new cases of myocarditis or pericarditis reported to date in these individuals.

“Given the record number of COVID-19 cases we are seeing in our state and how transmissible the Omicron variant is proving to be, this is welcome news,” said **DPH Director Dr. Karyl Rattay**. “Vaccines and booster doses offer the best protection against infection, hospitalization and death. I urge all Delawareans who are eligible to receive a booster dose to get one now. If you or your children have not received an initial round of the COVID-19 vaccine series, now is the time to protect yourself, your children and those you love. The more Delawareans who are vaccinated and protected against this virus, the better protected we all will be.”

According to CDC data, COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations are 7 and 11 times higher, respectively, in unvaccinated adolescents, compared to vaccinated adolescents.

The FDA and CDC also moved to allow for moderately or severely immunocompromised 5–11-year-olds to receive an additional primary dose of vaccine 28 days after their second shot. At this time, only the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is authorized and recommended for children aged 5-11. Children in this age group who have undergone solid organ transplantation, or who have been diagnosed with conditions that are considered to have an equivalent level of immunocompromise, may not respond adequately to the two-dose primary vaccination series, and benefit from a third dose. The FDA previously authorized a third primary series dose for use as part of the primary immunization series in individuals 12 years and older.

DPH encourages providers to use their clinical judgment and to consider additional factors for their patients when determining if the person meets the qualifications for immunocompromised status and is eligible for an additional/third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Delawareans who are eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine or booster shot are recommended to seek vaccines at existing vaccine sites, including pharmacies, health care providers, Federally Qualified Health Centers, DPH clinics and the following standing DPH Vaccine sites:

- Blue Hen Corporate Center: 655 S. Bay Road, Dover, DE 19901
- Georgetown Plaza: 19 Georgetown Plaza, Georgetown, DE 19947
- Canby Park: 1920 Maryland Ave., Wilmington, DE 19805
- University Plaza, 256 Chapman Road, Suite 100, Newark, DE 19702

For a complete list of locations where vaccines are available, visit [de.gov/getmyvaccine](https://de.gov/getmyvaccine).

###