

COVID-19 Vaccine Prioritization & Rollout

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What principles are being used to prioritize the delivery of vaccines across the province?

- Reducing morbidity and mortality (disease and death) in the community.
- Protecting the integrity of and access to the healthcare system.

2. When will the community be provided updates about the status of COVID-19 vaccine rollout in our region?

HPEPH will continue to keep the community informed as vaccine is received and we move through the various three Phases outlined by the Province. HPEPH will share notifications about public vaccination clinics through a variety of communication channels. The current status of vaccination rollout in our region continues to be available at hpepublichealth.ca/covid-19-vaccines.

3. When will it be my turn to get the COVID-19 vaccine?

Timelines for local implementation of the provincial rollout and eligibility associated with each phase continues to evolve based on vaccine availability. We are working to ensure that individuals receive the vaccine as soon as they become eligible. We are working diligently behind the scenes to be as prepared as possible to get the vaccine to eligible groups as soon as we receive it and will have public immunizations at a variety of locations throughout Hastings and Prince Edward County starting in March 2021.

4. How will I find out when it is my turn to get the vaccine?

In Phases 1 and 2, some eligible groups will be notified directly by HPEPH (through their employer or other administrators). As more vaccine becomes available and eligibility expands, HPEPH will share information about any opportunities for the general public to receive the vaccine. For the most up to date information available to the public, visit hpepublichealth.ca/covid-19-vaccines.

5. Where can I find out more about how priority groups are determined?

As vaccine prioritization and allocations are determined by the province, local public health units follow the direction set out by the Ministry of Health. The Ministry of Health has shared their ethical framework and guidelines for distribution to health care providers [online](#). Any decisions made at the local level are based on [national](#), provincial and local recommendations and guidelines and in consultation with local partners.

6. Who will receive the vaccination after long term care and health care workers?

Phase 1 priority groups will receive the vaccination over several weeks/months. Phase 1 groups are being prioritized into sub-groups based on level of risk and potential exposure. For example, health care workers have varying levels of risk and some may receive the vaccine much sooner than others. While HPEPH continues to receive information from the province and connect with local partners to prioritize vaccine delivery appropriately, current plans, including anticipated sub-groups are available at hpepublichealth.ca/covid-19-vaccines.

7. Will vaccine be distributed based on seniority?

No. Distributing a scarce resource by seniority is not deemed ethical.

8. Why will some groups of healthy individuals receive the vaccine before others who may have health concerns?

Certain groups have been identified as a priority to receive the vaccine due to their increased risk of exposure or outbreak. For example, Indigenous people in Canada have been identified as a priority group to receive the vaccine due to risk of outbreak in isolated settings and disproportionate impact of past pandemics.

9. What is the province's policy on vaccinating children for COVID-19?

Health Canada has approved the Pfizer vaccine for people 16 years of age and older, and the AstraZeneca and Moderna vaccines for people 18 years of age and older. As further scientific evidence is released additional information regarding vaccination of children will be released.

10. What is current information on pregnant and lactating women?

Though vaccine safety trials have not been completed on pregnant or lactating women, the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada (SOGC) Statement COVID-19 Vaccination in Pregnancy recommends the following: For individuals who are at high risk of infection and/or morbidity from COVID-19, it is the SOGC's position that the documented risk of not getting the COVID-19 vaccine outweighs the theorized and undescribed risk of being vaccinated during pregnancy or while breastfeeding, and vaccination should be offered.

11. How will we be tracking who receives the vaccine?

The COVID-19 vaccine will not be mandated for Ontarians, but we strongly suggest that people embrace the opportunity to be vaccinated. Ontarians will receive proof of immunization for COVID-19 and the province has a centralized IT solution that is supporting the COVID-19 vaccine clinics and administration sites.

12. Once the vaccine supply is stabilized and increased, how will we reach those who may be reluctant to get vaccinated?

We recognize individuals may be reluctant for many reasons. We are working to understand attitudes towards COVID-19 vaccinations and we will ensure tools are available to help residents make decisions about vaccination that are informed by reliable evidence.

13. Who can I contact if I disagree with the approach to vaccine rollout in our region?

We are committed to delivering the COVID-19 vaccine equitably, in alignment with the province's ethical framework. We are working with an [ethicist](#) to ensure that our decision making is morally justified. However, if you have feedback on our prioritization process, please submit it through our [online form](#).

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