

COVID-19 Vaccine FAQs

Q: Which youth are currently eligible to receive the COVID-19 Vaccine?

A: Every Texan 6 months of age and older is eligible to receive free COVID-19 vaccines, including children and youth in conservatorship. Please use the following link to determine the COVID-19 Vaccination Schedule:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/downloads/COVID-19-vacc-schedule-at-a-glance-508.pdf>

Q: I have a youth who received the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and is scheduled to move to a new placement before the date of the second dose. Should we hold off on the move until they receive their second dose?

A: A pending COVID-19 vaccine (initial or subsequent dose) should not be a consideration when changing placements. Placement decisions are based on what is in the child's best interests.

A person is not required to get multiple vaccines in the same location as long as proper documentation can be found by the different provider.

Q: What do I do with (or where do I find) documentation of the vaccine when a youth has received the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: At the time of a COVID-19 vaccine, a paper record (or "shot record") is provided. This document is very important, as it must be brought to the appointment for any additional dose or booster.

Proof of vaccine administration should be documented in the child's case file, by uploading the paper record into the Vaccination Record Tab of OneCase.

COVID-19 vaccines are entered by the vaccinator into the statewide ImmTrac system, which uploads into a youth's Health Passport monthly. A caseworker will be able to find the COVID-19 vaccine information in the Health Passport in either the Patient History or Medication History tabs.

Q: Where do I go to find a provider for the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: Healthcare providers may be administering the vaccine in their medical offices so caregivers should check with a youth's medical provider to see if that is an option. Tools for locating vaccine providers are also available at covidvaccine.texas.gov or vacunacovid.texas.gov. While distribution of the vaccine is controlled by the Department of State Health Services in all areas of the state, STAR Health may assist in finding a location. STAR Health Member Services can be reached at 1-866-912-6283.

Do not show up at a vaccine hub, medical provider's office or pharmacy without first signing up or checking the provider's instructions for scheduling.

Q: Is COVID-19 vaccine required if a youth is eligible?

A: No, the COVID-19 vaccine is voluntary in Texas. The COVID-19 vaccine is recommended for anyone who is eligible to receive it.

Although parental consent is not required for administering a vaccine for a child in temporary or permanent managing conservatorship, parents should have an opportunity to object if they wish. For children in conservatorship with any parent(s) whose parental rights have NOT been terminated, the caseworker will notify them of a plan to obtain an approved COVID-19 vaccine for their eligible child. If any parent with parental rights objects, do not proceed with vaccination and note the objection to the COVID-19 vaccination on Form 2085-B (Designation of Medical Consenter). Parental notification should be thoroughly documented in IMPACT in a case narrative note, including the date, time, and content of the notification.

Q: Do youth need to consent to receive a vaccine?

A: A youth in foster care who is at least 16 and who has been determined by a judge to be their own medical consenter has the right to consent to receiving medical care, including vaccines.

In addition to any caregiver designated as a Medical Consenter(s) on the 2085B form, the caseworker may provide consent for the COVID-19 vaccine for a youth in conservatorship.

In alignment with best practice, youth ages 16 and above should have the opportunity to provide assent to receive the vaccine. Youth 16 and older are transitioning to take responsibility for their medical care and should be consulted when recommending the vaccine. However, unless they have been named as their own medical consenter, the designated medical consenter for the youth (caregiver and/or caseworkers) has the authority to consent.

Q: How should I notify parents (whose parental rights have NOT been terminated) about the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: Verbal communication is adequate. Suggested language is, "DFPS would like to help protect your child's health when in our care by providing him/her with the COVID-19 vaccine, which is approved for his/her age. There is no cost to you." Document the parental notification as indicated above.

Q: What if I can't reach the parents (rights not terminated)?

A: You may also leave a voicemail for each parent with the above statement and indicate that the parent can contact you with any questions or concerns.

You may proceed with vaccination of the youth if you have not heard any objection from a parent within 72 hours of your voicemail message. The notification via voicemail should also be documented in IMPACT, indicating the date, time, and content of your voicemail notification.

Q: What if I can't even leave a voicemail or their phone is disconnected?

A: You should make 3 attempts for parental notification on 3 separate days, to all known parents whose parental rights are not terminated. Document your attempts including the date and time of each notification attempt. Caseworkers may proceed with a COVID-19 vaccine for the youth after three documented notification attempts.

Q: What if there are barriers such as transportation of a child to a location where a vaccine or booster can be administered?

A: Transportation should not be a barrier for children receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. Individuals can be registered to receive in-home vaccines to address transportation issues. Caregivers, caseworkers, or medical consenters can register for in home vaccines at <https://getthevaccine.dshs.texas.gov/> and selecting the homebound vaccine or by calling 833-832-7067.

Q: Where can I get an "at-home" COVID-19 test for a child?

A: "At-home test kits", four tests per child per month covered by STAR Health (or other Texas Medicaid plans), are available at no cost from a Medicaid-enrolled retail pharmacy with or without a prescription. The list of covered tests for Medicaid and CHIP is below and available on the Vendor Drug Program [website](#). HHSC selected these products based on their status under the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) from the U.S. Food & Drug Administration. To obtain, consenters presents either a Medicaid ID or the Medical Consent Form, Form 2085-B.

Free at-home tests are also available to be delivered by the US Postal Service. These can be ordered at <https://www.covid.gov/tests-or-by-calling-1-800-232-0233>.

Q: How do I determine if the child or youth has a health condition that may impact their vaccination?

A: COVID-19 vaccines are recommended for all eligible youth. Caregivers and medical consenters should discuss the vaccine with the youth's primary care physician or healthcare provider. The child's treating physician has specific details about the child's diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment and should be the one to identify any concerns and make recommendations about the vaccine. Physicians can also determine if a youth's condition is temporary and assist with the appropriate timing of the vaccine.

Should a medical professional or the child's primary care physician recommend a child not receive a vaccine, the caseworker should document this advice in a contact narrative. This contact should include the name of the physician who declined the vaccine, when the conversation occurred, and the reason for the recommendation.