

Timeline Announced for Group 3 COVID Vaccines + Equity a Priority in Vaccine Distribution



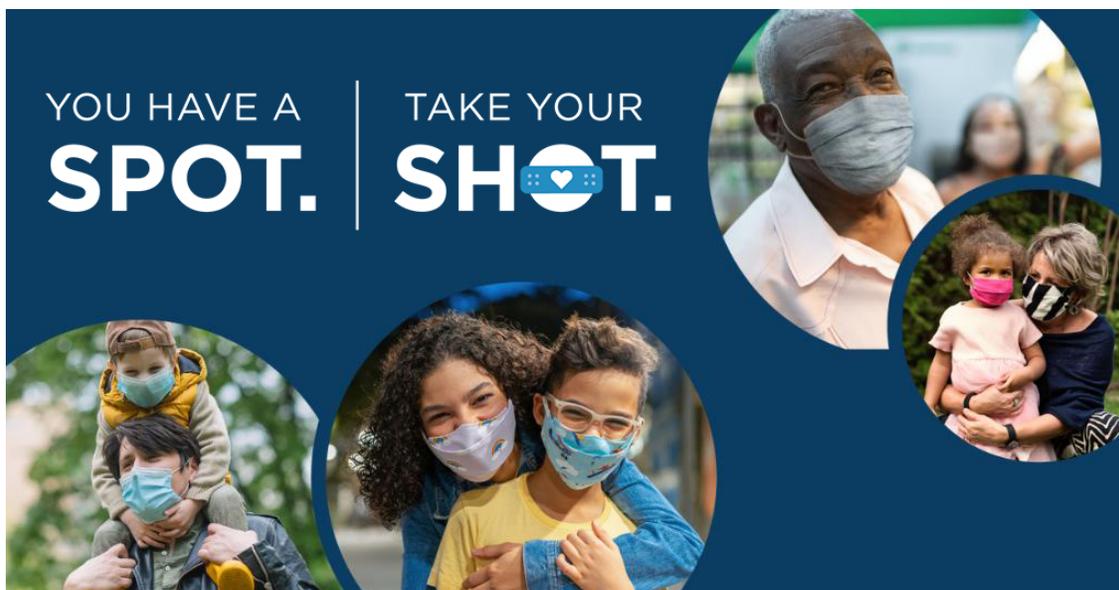
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COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS) NC UPDATE

Feb. 12, 2021

Timeline Announced for Group 3 COVID-19 Vaccines



The NC Department of Health and Human Services [announced plans](#) this week for how the state will move to Group 3 for COVID-19 vaccines. Because supply is still very limited and the population of frontline essential workers is so large, Group 3 will begin with vaccinating anyone working in child care or in PreK – 12 schools starting on Feb. 24.

Additional frontline essential workers will be eligible for vaccinations on March 10.

Some vaccine providers may not be ready to open to frontline essential workers on these dates if they are still experiencing high demand for vaccines in Groups 1 and 2, which includes health care workers, those who work and live in a long-term care setting, and anyone 65 and older.

Those eligible for the vaccine starting Feb. 24 include staff in child care centers and homes, Head Start programs, preschool and PreK programs, traditional public schools, charter schools and private schools. Anyone who must be in-person—such as teachers, bus and van drivers, custodial and maintenance staff, and food service workers—will be eligible to take their shot.

More details are available in our [Deeper Dive](#) on Child Care and School Frontline Essential Workers. To see when it's your spot to get your shot, go to YourSpotYourShot.nc.gov (English) or Vacunate.nc.gov (Spanish).

[NCDHHS Balances Speed With Equity in Vaccine Distribution](#)

Recognizing that historically marginalized communities have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, the state is [working to reduce](#) the high rates of sickness in these communities by ensuring the equitable distribution of information and vaccines.

NCDHHS is requiring all vaccine providers to collect race and ethnicity data. Last week, North Carolina became one of the first states in the country to release statewide race and ethnicity data for COVID-19 vaccines on its [dashboard](#). NCDHHS also recently [added new county demographic data](#) including data by race, ethnicity, gender, and age group for COVID-19 vaccinations to the vaccine data dashboard.

The state is also prioritizing a portion of its weekly vaccines to events that focus on underserved communities and allocating a baseline weekly amount of vaccine based on county population to ensure geographic equity. Additional vaccines are given to counties with higher numbers of low-income people and those with greater numbers of historically marginalized people.

Additionally, NCDHHS is [using research](#) from the [North Carolina Central University's](#) Advanced Center for COVID-19 Related Disparities' ([ACCORD](#)) that shows communication about the safety and effectiveness of COVID-19 coupled with local access to COVID-19 vaccination can significantly reduce vaccine hesitancy among historically marginalized people. The research allows NCDHHS to focus more resources where there is the most hesitancy, promoting the goal of equitable vaccine distribution.

Supplies of vaccine available from the federal government remain low, which means that

many people have to wait. Regardless of supply, North Carolina will continue to focus on equitable distribution to make sure [everyone has a spot to get their shot](#).

[Governor Cooper Visits COVID-19 Vaccine Site in Greensboro](#)



Governor Roy Cooper [visited](#) Mount Zion Baptist Church in Greensboro to see people getting vaccinated and learn more about how Guilford County is targeting undeserved communities in its vaccine distribution. The Mt. Zion site has focused on distributing the vaccine to communities of color, including by reaching out to other churches and community support groups.

[Continue Practicing the 3 Ws to Stay Safe](#)

If you leave home, know your Ws!



While our overall [COVID-19 metrics](#) are decreasing, they still [remain too high](#). Additionally, newer, potentially more contagious [variants of COVID-19](#) have been confirmed in North Carolina.

We need to keep doing the [3 Ws](#), even if you or those around you have been vaccinated. Whenever you are with people that don't live with you, wear a mask over your mouth and nose, wait 6 feet apart, and wash your often hands often. To ensure masks are as protective as possible, NCDHHS recommends that you:

- Make sure your mask fits snugly against your face and covers your nose and mouth.
- Use two or more layers for your face covering. You can do this by wearing a cloth face covering with two or more layers or by wearing one disposable mask underneath a cloth mask. Do not wear two disposable masks.
- Make sure you can see and breathe easily.

[Download the SlowCOVIDNC App to Slow the Spread](#)



If you haven't already, download the [SlowCOVIDNC app](#), the official exposure notification app of North Carolina. [SlowCOVIDNC](#) alerts users when they may have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

Nearly 700,000 people have already downloaded [SlowCOVIDNC](#), but the more people

who download and use [SlowCOVIDNC](#), the more we can slow the spread of COVID-19.

The app is completely anonymous and does not collect, store or share personal information or location data. Download for free on the [Apple App Store](#) and the [Google Play Store](#).

COVID-19 Testing

Anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19, has been around people outside of their household or thinks they have been exposed to the virus should get [tested](#). If you are sick, you can use the [Check My Symptoms](#) tool to help you determine if you need a COVID-19 test.

North Carolina has upcoming no-cost community testing events scheduled throughout the state. For an up-to-date list of events, visit the [No-Cost Testing Events](#) webpage. For more details about a specific event, call ahead before you go for a test.

COVID-19 testing is also provided at some local health departments, doctor and clinician offices, hospitals and clinics, many pharmacy sites and retail outlets, and other community locations. You can find testing sites by using the [Find My Testing Place](#) tool online.

Other COVID-19 News

- On Feb. 9, NCDHHS [announced](#) that more than 10,000 North Carolinians have died from COVID-19, a sad and sobering milestone.
- On Feb. 10, Governor Cooper [signed the COVID-19 Relief Bill](#) into law.
- North Carolina has seen a [dramatic drop](#) in the spread of flu and other respiratory illnesses due to many people practicing the 3 Ws.

Get the Latest Information

- Visit the [NCDHHS COVID-19 website](#) for information, a [data dashboard](#), [updates](#), [live briefings](#) and more.
- Go to [North Carolina's COVID-19 Information Hub](#) for resources, information and assistance across state government, including the latest [news releases](#).
- Follow NCDHHS on [social media](#) for advance notice of press briefings and a recap.



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