



January 29, 2021

Dear Madison County School Staff,

Over the last several weeks I have had the privilege of looking into the grateful and smiling eyes of some of our most vulnerable people in our community as they receive COVID-19 vaccine. Delivering hope is something that I and my staff celebrate and cherish. Soon it will be your turn. This is an important and confident step forward in this pandemic. Vaccinating Madison County school staff is one of our top priorities. In fact, we believe it is an honor to serve you in the manner.

As we enter February, I want to share what we know about school staff vaccinations and what you can expect.

Vaccine is scarce – even for schools. Ohio's phased plan to make vaccine available to our highest-risk citizens is largely based on the limited amount of vaccine that we receive. Demand far outpaces supply right now. Vaccine will be specifically allocated for schools in the coming weeks. This may come in the form of a single shipment of vaccine of such quantity that will be enough for every Madison County school. Alternatively, it may be allocated for specific school districts over the period of weeks.

Do not get a vaccine somewhere else. Madison County Public Health is allocated vaccine each week for the general population that is eligible based on age. Vaccine is coming to the county specifically for schools. The Governor, the Ohio Department of Health, and Madison County Public Health do not want school staff competing for vaccine that is targeted for our senior citizens. If school staff come to a public clinic at the Molly Caren Agricultural Center they will not receive vaccine. Please wait for vaccine to be specifically allocated to schools.

Pre-registration is a must. Madison County Public Health has a simple pre-registration system for COVID-19 vaccine. This can be found at covidvaccine.madisonph.org or getavaccine.madisonph.org. You can pre-register today. For our school vaccine clinics, you must pre-register to get vaccine. When we schedule a clinic to administer vaccine to school staff, pre-registration must be complete 24 hours before the clinic. If you are not pre-registered, you will not receive vaccine. COVID-19 vaccine has very specific handling and transportation requirements and we cannot waste a single dose. We need to know exactly how many doses we are administering before we begin the clinic.

The vaccine manufacturer may vary. Two vaccine manufacturers are approved by the FDA. We do not have the option to select what vaccine we receive and ultimately administer to you. We cannot take requests for specific vaccine manufacturers. Both manufacturer's vaccines are equally effective at preventing or suppressing the symptoms of COVID-19. No study has demonstrated that one vaccine is measurably superior to the other.

Vaccinating all school staff in the county will take time. Although the Governor's original goal was to make vaccine available to all schools during the first week of February, this will not happen. Vaccinating all willing school staff in Madison County will likely progress through the entire month of February. Nearly 75% of school staff in the county have indicated they will get vaccinated in February (this is a GREAT number by the way!).

Vaccine will be administered at your school district. Madison County Public Health will provide vaccine to school staff at your school district. Planning efforts are ongoing to select the best days, times, and locations in your district for vaccine clinics. Days and times may be dictated by supply and timing of delivery.

Chris Cook, MPH, RS
Health Commissioner

Dr. James Kaehr, MD
Medical Director

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Our Mission

We are committed to monitoring and responding to our community's health and wellness needs through innovative services, education, collaboration, and compassionate care.



We must all remain flexible, nimble, and quick. In the coming days the Ohio Department of Health will provide an approximate date that counties can expect to receive school vaccine. These allocations can change rapidly with little notice. Over the last month, our notices of a pending vaccine allocations have been received between one and three days before delivery. If we receive vaccine at the beginning of the week we may schedule your school's vaccine clinic with just a few days' notice (so now is a good time to pre-register!).

Side effects from the vaccine are normal. While everyone experiences varying side effects, most people have a sore arm and feel tired following the first dose of vaccine. The second dose of vaccine elicits a stronger immune system response. People tend to report more side effects following the second dose including mild body aches, headache, and chills. These side effects are short-lived and are far milder than COVID-19 illness. Side effects are an indication that your body is doing exactly what it should be doing – preparing to fight COVID-19.

You do not have to isolate if you have mild side effects. Side effects such as a low fever, chills, headache, body aches, or fatigue are normal. These are non-systemic **side effects** of the vaccine as it helps to prepare your immune system. A cough, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, and shortness of breath are systemic **symptoms** of COVID-19 and *are not* side effects. If you experience mild **side effects** during the 1-2 days after vaccination you do not have to isolate yourself at home. If you experience **symptoms** you should get tested for COVID-19 and isolate at home. You cannot get COVID-19 from the vaccine.

Second doses are critical. Vaccine trials demonstrated that people achieved about 50% immunity after their first dose of COVID-19 vaccine. A second dose of vaccine pushed that immunity to nearly 95%. Second doses are critical and should not be viewed as optional. If you receive Moderna vaccine you should get your second dose at least four weeks after your first dose. If you receive Pfizer vaccine you should get your second dose at least three weeks after your first dose. The CDC indicates that the second dose of vaccine can be administered up to six weeks after the first dose. Madison County Public Health will provide second doses as close as possible to the manufacturer's recommended interval (four or three weeks depending on which vaccine you receive). First doses will be administered to all staff on the same day. We are working with school leadership to determine the best way to administer second doses which *may* involve two separate second dose vaccine clinics during a single week.

Personal and herd immunity takes time. To develop full immunity the entire vaccination process will take up to six weeks depending on which vaccine you receive (for example, full immunity is achieved with Moderna vaccine two weeks after the second dose). Until greater numbers of people are vaccinated across Ohio, protective actions will continue for both vaccinated and unvaccinated people (such as distancing, masking, and quarantine). As we get closer to herd immunity, the requirement for quarantine of exposed, vaccinated people will likely be dropped by the CDC, the Ohio Department of Health, and Madison County Public Health. Requirements for distancing and masking will continue across Ohio for everyone until vaccine is readily available to the entire population. We will get "back to normal" but it will not be an on/off switch for individuals.

Visit our website at covidvaccine.madisonph.org for additional information (including facts and myths) about COVID-19 vaccine. The entire staff at Madison County Public Health is looking forward to serving you in the coming weeks by providing COVID-19 vaccine. I simply ask that you remain patient, vigilant, and flexible.

Hope is just around the corner,

Chris Cook, MPH, RS
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