

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a black face mask, is looking down at a laptop in a modern office. In the background, other people are working at desks, and large windows let in bright light.

COVID-19 Vaccines and Your Workplace

Presented by Hausmann-Johnson Insurance | The Benefit Services Group, Inc.

Introduction

This presentation compiles expert guidance primarily from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

It addresses a number of COVID-19 vaccine-related workplace topics for employers to consider.

The information presented here is nonexhaustive and is for informational purposes only.





Agenda

- Overview of COVID-19 Vaccines
- Employee Communication Best Practices
- Workplace Vaccination Plans
- Offering On-site Vaccinations
- What's Next

Overview of COVID-19 Vaccines

Three vaccines are currently available:

1. Pfizer vaccine
2. Moderna vaccine
3. Johnson & Johnson (J&J) vaccine

All are effective at preventing serious COVID-19 illness.

- Major differences include storage instructions and dosage requirements.



Benefits of a Vaccinated Workforce

Benefits for employers:

- Improved workforce health by helping prevent employees from getting COVID-19
- Reduced absences due to illness
- Reduced time missed from work to get vaccinated
- Improved productivity
- Improved morale

Benefits for employees:

- Prevented COVID-19 illness
 - Reduced absences and doctor visits due to illness
 - Affirmation that their employer cares about their well-being
 - Improved sense of safety
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Vaccine Eligibility

Vaccine Rollout

- President Joe Biden urged all states to open vaccine *eligibility* to all adults as of **April 19, 2021**.
 - However, vaccine *availability* will vary by state and by industry type, and final distribution decisions will be left to local governments.

Recommended Recipients

- Individuals ages 16 and up can receive a vaccine (depending on which one). However, there are some caveats to this, particularly if the individual has certain health conditions.
 - While experts are encouraging as many people as possible to get vaccinated, anyone considering getting the vaccines should first consult their doctor.
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Employee Communication Best Practices

Gauging employee interest can inform communication efforts.

- Will employees be eager to receive the vaccine? Will they feel safer with a mandatory policy or not?
 - Consider using a survey to get these answers and modify communications to address the uncovered pain points.

Topics to touch on include:

- General COVID-19 vaccine information
 - The organization's vaccination policy
 - Planned vaccination sites, when available (whether at authorized clinics and pharmacies, or on-site)
 - Vaccination costs (including potential paid time off for getting vaccinated or recovering from any side effects)
 - Workplace COVID-19 safety precautions or protocols, such as continuing to wear a mask and avoiding close contact in the workplace
 - Educational resources to learn more about COVID-19 vaccines
 - Vaccine symptoms to watch for and related workplace protocols
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Employee Communication Action Steps

- Employers should keep employees informed at every step of their vaccination decision-making. Employers play an important role in educating employees about vaccines.
 - Stick to facts and avoid jargon that employees may not understand.
 - Use multiple channels, including:
 - FAQ sheets
 - Emails
 - Videos
 - Posters
 - Articles
 - Communicate early and often, and request that employees reach out with questions.
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Getting Employees Vaccinated

Getting employees to actually receive a COVID-19 vaccine, once available, may be a challenge. To help, the CDC recommends the following:

- Offer flexible, nonpunitive sick leave options (e.g., paid sick leave) for employees with signs and symptoms after vaccination.
 - Allow time for vaccine confidence to grow. Workers who are hesitant at first may become more confident after seeing co-workers get vaccinated.
 - Employers with an on-site clinic should offer more than one opportunity for vaccination.
 - Ask organizations and individuals who are respected in employee communities to help build confidence in COVID-19 vaccines.
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Workplace Vaccination Plans

Employers developing a vaccination plan must consider their unique circumstances, including employee attitudes. Here are some best practices for helping inform that decision-making:

- **Gauge the situation** – Look to what others in the industry are doing, and talk to employees about their vaccine opinions. This can help determine what kind of vaccination plan, if any, is best for your organization.
- **Ensure resources are in place** – Designate specific personnel to answer any vaccine-related questions from employees.
- **Communicate the plan** – Keep employees in the loop and provide ample educational resources.

Offering On-site Vaccinations

- Employers can consider offering on-site vaccinations, and should speak with their local health departments for more information on eligibility (as not all workplaces will qualify).
 - For eligible employers choosing to offer on-site vaccinations, the planning process for hosting a workplace COVID-19 vaccination program should include input from management, HR, employees and labor representatives, as appropriate.
 - Important preliminary steps include obtaining senior management support, identifying a vaccine coordinator, and enlisting expertise from local public health authorities, occupational health providers and pharmacies.
 - Employers should also consider a communication strategy for spreading the word and encouraging employee sign-ups.
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What's Next

- Government guidance continues to fluctuate, but all adults should be eligible for a vaccine as of **April 19, 2021**.
 - However, local government decisions may vary.
- Stay tuned for potential COVID-19-related updates from the CDC, local health officials and other agencies.
- Reach out to us with any questions or to request helpful resources.

Questions?

