



January 25, 2021

Dear Early Care and Education Provider:

On behalf of the State of Illinois, thank you for your tireless service in the care and education of children across Illinois. Like you, we are committed to the health, safety, and well-being of the children in care, their families and you - their provider. We know this has been a challenging year on so many levels, and we are excited to now be turning our focus and efforts to rolling out COVID-19 vaccinations in Illinois.

As you know, based on CDC and our own Illinois Department of Public Health guidance, vaccines are being rolled out in three priority groups: 1A, 1B, and 2. **Early care and education providers, including Early Intervention, home- and center-based child care providers, home visiting & MIECHV providers, Head Start/Early Head Start providers, and Preschool for All providers are all included in Priority Group 1B.**

Please note that support staff, including custodial, transportation, kitchen, and other staff are also eligible for the vaccine under Priority Group 1B. However, Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) staff and family members of the provider are not included in this priority group.

Frontline essential health care and long-term care workers made up the vast majority of Group 1A. While different parts of the State are moving forward at slightly different paces (due to population and size), the Governor has announced that enough of Group 1A has successfully been vaccinated for the entire State to move into Group 1B on January 25, 2021.

This communication is intended to help you access information and find the closest location where you can obtain a COVID-19 vaccine.

- It is important to know that vaccine distribution is very much happening at the local level, so you will need information that is specific to your county/region of the State. To find out where you can get a vaccine, visit <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/>. You may also access information from your local county health department: <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/contact-us/idph-regional-health-departments>. If you live in the city of Chicago, visit <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/covid19-vaccine/home/latest-updates.html>.

Here are some important things to know before setting up an appointment for your vaccine:

1. No proof of citizenship or legal residency is required to obtain a vaccine.
2. You will be asked to sign a "self-attestation". This signature affirms to the State that you are an early childhood care and education provider and eligible for a vaccine in Priority Group 1B.
3. If you go through your local health department for the vaccine, you may be asked to demonstrate you live in that county. A drivers' license, State ID or utility bill will suffice as proof.
4. It is important to know that the State is not requiring proof to receive a vaccine in a priority grouping. However, some locations may ask you to demonstrate you are an early childhood care and education provider and qualify for the vaccine in Priority Group 1B. Please know that you cannot be turned away if you do not have proof of profession. However, to be safe, we encourage you to bring any of the following documentation:
 - a. Your Gateways Registry Membership Card. To enroll in Gateways and/or download your Gateways Registry Membership Card ID, visit <https://registry.ilgateways.com>
 - b. Credential/enrollment in Illinois' Early Intervention System: <https://www.providerconnections.org/public/home.mvc>



- c. Your DCFS license (if you are a licensed child care provider)
- d. A pay stub, if you work for a larger child care or early learning agency
- e. A work ID, if you have one
- f. A certificate has been created with the Seal of Illinois that can be used to verify your role in the early childhood workforce (contact your local CCR&R or CFC).

Also, from the Governor's daily press briefing on Friday January 22, 2021, the following was announced:

Over 3.2 million Illinoisans are eligible for Phase 1B. Eligible residents will be able to receive a vaccine at one of the Illinois National Guard (ILNG) assisted sites, at a site operated by a local health department, or at a partner pharmacy. Walgreens is now online in limited number of sites statewide. CVS and Jewel-Osco will be coming online early next week and additional pharmacies such as Hy-Vee, Mariano's, and Kroger will be joining later next week. Taken together, these pharmacy partners will provide hundreds of sites in every region of the state.

Staying informed is key to getting a vaccine. Here are some helpful resources we encourage you to check regularly for updated information.

- The [Illinois Department of Public Health's website](#) is the best source of information on [regional conditions](#) and the activities restricted and permitted in each region due to COVID-19
- The [IDPH COVID-19 Vaccination plan](#) has the most recent information re: the State's strategy to vaccinate against COVID-19
- More information related to COVID-19 can be found by visiting <http://dph.illinois.gov./covid19/vaccine-faq>
- For city of Chicago information, visit <https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/covid19-vaccine/home/latest-updates.html>



An effective, safe, and easily accessible vaccine will help all of us return to a pre-pandemic *normal*. Getting vaccinated will afford you a critical layer of protection against the virus. For additional information about the safety and efficacy of the vaccine, you can visit <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/index.html>.

By taking the vaccine, you are protecting yourself, your family, friends, and co-workers. In addition to getting the vaccine, **we must also continue to wear a mask, wash our hands, and maintain a minimum of six feet between you and other people whenever possible**. Our coming through the pandemic will require all of us to continue to practice these safety measures for the foreseeable future.

Please continue to be safe and be well.

Thank You,

Jamilah R. Jor'dan, PhD
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