Kansas Vaccination Phases | By Population

Phase 1: Late January
- Healthcare workers
- Residents or patients in Long-term care (LTC), senior housing or LTC-supported independent living
- Workers critical to pandemic response continuity

Phase 2: March
- Persons Aged 65+
- Congregate settings
- High-contact critical workers
- All unvaccinated persons prioritized in previous phases

Phase 3: Late April - Mid May
- Aged 16-64 with severe medical risks
- Other critical workers
- All unvaccinated persons prioritized in previous phases

Phase 4: June
- Aged 16-64 with other medical risks
- All unvaccinated persons prioritized in previous phases

Phase 5: Rest of pop. 16+
- Children*
- All unvaccinated persons prioritized in previous phases

*Subject to further research on Vaccine risks and effectiveness for children; Note: Dates of phases are dependent upon vaccine supply.
COVID-19 vaccination phases in Kansas

About this document

- As COVID-19 vaccines are approved by the FDA, the federal government is supplying states with limited doses on a weekly basis.
- Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) has created a list of populations, spread across 5 phases, to prioritize for vaccination
- This document lays out Kansas' current prioritized vaccination plan and provides more detailed definitions of identified population segments

Our methodology

- To develop this phasing, we segmented and prioritized Kansas' population based on public health risk and criticality to state infrastructure
- Throughout the process, we have used an equity lens to ensure inclusion of socially and medically vulnerable communities in our prioritization
- The Governor and KDHE engaged an independent advisory committee to review and co-develop these phases, ensuring broad input
- We have also relied on the expert opinion of the CDC and ACIP recommendations
- The COVID-19 environment is dynamic, and thus we will continue to adapt these phases and priority groups as we learn more about the disease situation in Kansas and across the country

How we will operationalize these phases

- KDHE will maintain a flexible approach to moving through phases, prioritizing the vaccination of current phase populations and maximizing speed under federal supply constraints
- We are engaging local health departments, providers (hospitals, clinics, pharmacies) etc. across the state to distribute and administer the vaccine
- We will ensure equity throughout the vaccine distribution process, e.g. by prioritizing providers, such as safety net clinics in vulnerable communities and proactive outreach and communications to those at risk
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- Rest of pop. 16+
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*Subject to further research on Vaccine risks and effectiveness for children.

Note: Dates of phases are dependent upon vaccine supply.
KDHE adopted federal recommendations to assess exposure risks associated with workplaces and living arrangements.

Federal guidelines\(^1\) consider the number and nature of contacts required by different occupations:

In addition to health risks associated with **clinical outcomes and death**, KDHE considered the following exposure-related risks in our approach:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proximity</th>
<th>Residents and staff are less than 6ft away from one another</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of contact</td>
<td>Exposure to droplets, shared surfaces, common items</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact duration</td>
<td>Average interactions last more than 10 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges to implement protective measures</td>
<td>Space is indoors, confined, or it is not possible to control with whom workers will interact</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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# Phase 1 | Healthcare workers: Identifying characteristics and working definition

## Definition

Paid and unpaid persons serving in healthcare or healthcare-associated jobs, who are unable to work from home and may be directly or indirectly exposed to patients or infectious materials as a result of their jobs.

## Description

Workers with any of the following features:
- Required to regularly enter a hospital (inpatient) or outpatient clinical setting;
- Involved in pandemic response (e.g., testing centers);
- In a healthcare or healthcare-associated setting, in contact with patients or infectious materials;

## Examples of groups included

- Staff in long-term care facility
- Workers in direct contact with patients, e.g., MD/DO/DPM, nurses, EMTs, clinical students and trainees
- Diagnostic labs, phlebotomists, pandemic health workers (e.g., individuals performing COVID tests)
- Mental healthcare providers, pharmacy staff, non-medical staff – if exposed to patients or infectious materials;
- Healthcare-associated contractors, including food, waste management etc.
- Dentists, physical therapists, professionals performing elective procedures
- Home care workers, CMS-designated caretaker
- Morticians, forensic and funeral service workers;
- Staff in FQHCs, CHCs, safety-net/ free clinics, faith-based outreach clinics (inclusive of state-funded clinics)
- Home health aides, nursing assistants

Phase 2 | High-contact critical\(^1\) workers: identifying characteristics and working definition

### Definition

Workers providing critical services who are at a higher risk of being infected, because their jobs require consistent and close contact with a large number of individuals.

### Description

- Critical workers are those necessary to maintain systems, assets and activities that are vital to the state (or national) security, the economy, or public health, as defined by the Department of Homeland Security.
- Risk is associated with the likelihood of infecting oneself or spreading COVID. Factors that increase risk include proximity, type of contact, duration of contacts and challenges to implement protective measures.
- Settings that provide a critical service and have recorded high transmission rates or become clusters in the past are usually high risk;

### Examples of groups included

- Firefighters, police officers, first responders, correction officers
- Grocery store workers and food services
- K-12 and childcare workers, including teachers, custodians, drivers and other staff
- Food processing, including meat processing plants
- Large-scale aviation manufacturing plants
- Transportation workers
- Workers in the following industries, if they regularly need to be in high-risk settings to perform their duties:
  - Retail, warehouses and sales outlets
  - Agriculture
  - Supply of critical services or materials for the COVID response (e.g. PPE)
  - The U.S. Postal Service
  - Department of Motor Vehicles

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1- As defined by the Department of Homeland Security.
Phase 2 | Congregate settings: identifying characteristics and working definition

**Definition**

Anyone living or working in licensed congregate settings and other special care or congregate environments

- Licensed congregate settings are facilities licensed by the state or local government, that provide housing or care arrangements and where social distancing is not possible; they provide a form of social service or healthcare (or healthcare-associated) service
- Settings included in this phase are monitored by the state or the local government, or house vulnerable populations under care, e.g. in-home care and retirement facilities
- Risk is increased because of:
  - Proximity, i.e., residents and staff are less than 6ft away from one another
  - Type of contact, i.e., exposure to droplets, shared surfaces, common items
  - Duration, i.e., average interactions last more than 10 min
  - Potentially high number of contacts and, sometimes, difficulties to implement protective measures

**Examples of groups included**

- Homeless shelters and other homeless housing settings and dwelling places
- Congregate childcare institutions, adult and child protective services
- Emergency shelters or safe houses for victims of domestic violence
- Corrections facilities, including jails and juvenile justice facilities
- Behavioral Health institutions (including mental health institutions) and residential treatment centers
- Adult care homes, residents and staff in home plus facilities not covered in phase 1
- Senior living homes
- Home care givers (paid or unpaid), personal care aides
Phase 3 | Aged 16-64 with severe medical risks: identifying characteristics and working definition

Definition

Persons aged 16–64 years with medical conditions that increase the risk for severe COVID-19

Description

Persons in the target age group who have been diagnosed with any of the conditions currently listed in the "conclusive data and information" list, provided by the CDC (see below)

Examples of groups included

Currently in the list, which is regularly updated as new evidence becomes available

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease;
- Down Syndrome
- Heart conditions, such cardiomyopathies;
- Immunocompromised state from solid organ transplant;
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus;
- Sickle cell disease;
- Pregnant patients¹

¹. Vaccines currently available under EUA have not been tested in pregnant women. Therefore, there are no safety data specific to use in pregnancy. A conversation with a clinician is specially important in such cases, and individuals who decide not to take the vaccine should be supported in their decision. See ACOG recommendations for further information.

Phase 3 | Other critical workers\(^1\): identifying characteristics and working definition

**Definition**

Non-healthcare workers in critical infrastructure, who cannot perform their duties remotely and therefore face risks of work-related exposure to COVID-19

**Description**

Critical workers are characterized as those operating in-person to maintain systems, assets and activities that are vital to the state (or the country's) security, economy, or public health, as defined by the Department of Homeland Security.

**Examples of groups included**

- Agricultural and food workers not included in previous phases
- Workers performing in-person activities indoors, in critical manufacturing, not included in previous phases; this includes aviation, production of critical supplies for the COVID response
- Utility workers
- Social service and government workers not included in previous priority phases
- Logistics workers, such as truck transportation workers, couriers and others
- Water and wastewater workers
- Shelter and housing (e.g., construction) workers, finance (e.g., bank tellers)
- Information technology and communications workers

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1. As defined by the Department of Homeland Security
**Phase 4 | Aged 16-64 with other medical risks: identifying characteristics and working definition**

**Definition**

Persons aged 16–64 years with medical conditions that increase the risk for severe COVID-19

**Description**

Persons in the target age group who have been diagnosed with any of the conditions currently listed in the "conditions [that] might be at an increased risk" list, provided by the CDC (see below)

- CDC's second list of conditions, which include (non-exhaustive):
  - Asthma (moderate-to-severe)
  - Cerebrovascular disease (affects blood vessels and blood supply to the brain)
  - Cystic fibrosis
  - Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines
  - Neurologic conditions, such as dementia
  - Liver disease
  - Pulmonary fibrosis (having damaged or scarred lung tissues)
  - Thalassemia (a type of blood disorder)
  - Type 1 diabetes mellitus
  - Obesity and severe obesity

**Examples of groups included**

Vaccines currently available under EUA have not been tested in pregnant women. Therefore, there are no safety data specific to use in pregnancy. A conversation with a clinician is especially important in such cases, and individuals who decide not to take the vaccine should be supported in their decision. See ACOG recommendations for further information.

Governor Laura Kelly Announces Finalized Vaccine Distribution Order

TOPEKA – Governor Laura Kelly today announced her administration’s final COVID-19 distribution order for population groups in Kansas. The vaccine will be administered in five phases, beginning with those most at risk of contracting or becoming seriously ill from COVID-19 and ending with all Kansans at large.

“These COVID-19 vaccination phase groups were created using guidance from national and state public health experts and with input from the Kansas Coronavirus Vaccine Advisory Council, or COVAC, which represents a diverse group of populations in Kansas,” Governor Laura Kelly said. “My priority remains providing every Kansan with updates and information on vaccine schedules as we get them and to get everyone vaccinated as quickly and efficiently as possible.”

The Kansas Coronavirus Advisory Council, representing a diverse group of Kansans statewide, is part of Governor Kelly’s commitment to maximizing benefits, minimizing harm, and striving for equity, justice, and fairness when it comes to when the vaccine will be made available to which Kansans.

The five phases of the order are as follows:

**Phase 1:**

- Health care workers
- Residents or patients in long-term care facilities and senior housing
- Workers critical to pandemic response continuity
*Phase 1 groups have already begun to receive vaccines*

**Phase 2:**

- Persons aged 65 and older

- High-contact critical workers necessary to maintain systems, assets, and activities that are vital to the state security, the economy or public health, or who interact with large numbers of contacts and job-related COVID-19 exposure. COVID-19 risk is associated with the likelihood of infecting oneself or spreading the virus. Factors that increase risk include proximity, type of contact, duration of contacts and challenges to implement protective measures. This includes:
  - Firefighters, police officers, first responders, and correction officers
  - Grocery store workers and food services
  - K-12 and childcare workers, including teachers, custodians, drivers, and other staff
  - Food processing, including meat processing plants
  - Large-scale aviation manufacturing plants
  - Transportation workers
  - Workers in retail, agriculture, supply of critical services or materials for COVID-19 response, the U.S. Postal Service, and Department of motor vehicles

- Those living or working in licensed congregate settings and other special care or congregate environments where social distancing is not possible, including:
  - Homeless shelters
  - Congregate childcare institutions
  - Emergency shelters or safe houses
  - Corrections facilities
  - Behavioral health institutions

**Phase 3:**

- Those aged 16-64 with serious medical conditions that increase the risk for severe illness from COVID-19, including:
  - Cancer
  - Chronic kidney disease
  - Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
  - Down Syndrome
  - Heart conditions like cardiomyopathies
  - Immunocompromised state from solid organ transplant
  - Type 2 diabetes
  - Sickle cell disease
  - Pregnant patients

- Other non-health care workers in critical infrastructure who cannot work remotely, including:
  - Agricultural and food workers not included in previous phases
  - Workers performing in-person activities indoors, in critical manufacturing, not included in previous phases. This includes aviation and production of critical supplies for the COVID response
- Utility workers
- Social service and government workers not included in previous phases
- Logistics workers, such as truck transportation workers, couriers and others
- Water and wastewater workers
- Shelter and housing workers, finance workers
- Information technology and communications workers

**Phase 4:**

- Those aged 16-64 with other medical conditions that increase the risk for severe illness from COVID-19 such as:
  - Asthma
  - Cerebrovascular disease
  - Cystic Fibrosis
  - Immunocompromised state from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, or use of immune weakening medicines
  - Neurologic conditions such as dementia
  - Liver disease
  - Pulmonary fibrosis
  - Type 1 diabetes
  - Obesity and severe obesity

**Phase 5:**

- The rest of the population 16 and older
- Potentially children, dependent upon further research on the effectiveness and risks associated with vaccinating kids

View a visual representation of the distribution order here.

View informational slides regarding vaccine distribution here.

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