

Adam Crum
Commissioner

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Department of Health

Anchorage, Alaska

STATE OF ALASKA

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Clinton Bennett, DOH, 907-269-4996, clinton.bennett@alaska.gov

Updated COVID-19 boosters available this week after FDA grants authorization and CDC approves new recommendations

September 6, 2022, ANCHORAGE – The updated bivalent COVID-19 boosters by Moderna and Pfizer are expected to be available this week in Alaska following last week's emergency use authorization by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and approval by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Alaska vaccine providers have ordered over 38,000 doses of the updated bivalent boosters, with deliveries anticipated this week.

The Moderna and Pfizer bivalent boosters target two strains of COVID-19 – the original strain of the virus and two omicron subvariants (BA.4 and BA.5), currently the most widespread subvariants. **People aged 12 years and older are eligible if they have completed a primary series and it has been at least two months since either their primary or a booster dose.** As of August 31, the original monovalent booster will not be available to people aged 12 years and older.

“It is great to have our first updated booster that protects against the virus currently circulating. This is another important tool to keep Alaskans protected against serious outcomes from COVID-19,” said Alaska’s Chief Medical Officer Dr. Anne Zink. “This updated booster is becoming widely available across the state. if you have questions, please talk to your health care provider, local pharmacist, public health nurse or call our COVID-19 vaccine helpline at 907-646-3322.”

As updated boosters become available, Alaskans have several options to find a vaccine provider or make an appointment:

- Visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov)
- Text their ZIP code to 438829
- Call the Alaska COVID-19 Helpline at 907-646-3322 (hours are 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on weekdays)

The Pfizer bivalent booster is currently authorized for people aged **12 years and older**, while Moderna’s is currently authorized for people aged **18 years and older**. People aged 18 years and older

may choose to receive either the Pfizer or Moderna bivalent booster, regardless of which product they received previously.

The original formulas of Pfizer, Moderna, Johnson & Johnson and Novavax vaccines will continue to be used for primary series. If Alaskans have not been vaccinated or have not completed their primary series, COVID vaccines are available at most pharmacies and health care providers' offices in Alaska.

Both Pfizer and Moderna have ongoing clinical trials for bivalent boosters for children younger than 12 years, and plan to submit data to the FDA as soon as possible. With both influenza and COVID-19 circulating in Alaska, staying up to date on influenza and COVID-19 vaccines is important for the prevention of severe disease, hospitalization, and death. You are considered up-to-date on COVID vaccines if you have completed a primary series and received the most recent CDC-recommended booster dose.

For the latest information on updated bivalent boosters, including how to find a vaccine provider, visit covidvax.alaska.gov. Additional information COVID-19 can be found at covid19.alaska.gov. COVID-19 data for Alaska is available at on the [COVID-19 data dashboard](#).

Finally, everyone aged 6 months and older should receive an annual flu shot. Flu vaccine is available now in Alaska; the CDC recommends people receive their flu shot in September or October, before flu begins circulating widely.

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CORRECTION: This sentence, which was in an earlier version of this press release, has been corrected: "Both Pfizer and Moderna have ongoing clinical trials for bivalent boosters for children aged 12 years and older, and plan to submit data to the FDA as soon as possible." The corrected sentence now reads, "Both Pfizer and Moderna have ongoing clinical trials for bivalent boosters for children younger than 12 years, and plan to submit data to the FDA as soon as possible."