

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Jeanne M. Lambrew, Ph.D.
Commissioner



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April 2, 2021

Dear Resource Parents,

We hope this letter finds you able to enjoy some time outside as we begin to enjoy spring in Maine. Within our state, there is a sense of hopefulness about the prospect of a return to “normal” activities and being able spend time with family and friends that have been missed. As you are probably aware, Maine is using an age-based approach for vaccine eligibility, and we encourage all resource parents to get vaccinated when eligible. Everyone in Maine will have the opportunity to get vaccinated against COVID-19 at no cost.

Vaccination is one of the most important steps in ending the pandemic. Do it for yourself, family, children, and community.

On April 1, 2021 Governor Mills announced an accelerated schedule of Maine’s vaccination plan to make all people of Maine eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine by April 7, 2021. The schedule is as follows:

- March 23, 2021: Age 50 and older
- April 7, 2021: Age 16 and older

Starting on April 7, all Maine people over the age of 16 years will be able to schedule an appointment for their COVID -19 vaccine. This will include any youth who may be in your home who is over 16 years of age. Please begin to have conversations about the vaccine with your family members and discuss any concerns about vaccination with your medical provider.

For the youth who are 16-18 years old, the Pfizer vaccine will be available at sites across Maine.

Since the Pfizer vaccine requires special handling, distribution is limited and not every vaccination site in Maine can offer the Pfizer vaccine. Additionally, not every vaccination site with the Pfizer vaccine is prepared to vaccinate youth at this time. Starting on April 7, 2021, the State of Maine’s [listing of vaccination sites](#) will indicate which sites are accepting appointments for youth. The Community Vaccination Line (1-888-445-4111) will also be available to provide information regarding vaccine and clinic availability.

For more information on COVID-19 vaccines in Maine, go to the Governor’s website:
<https://www.maine.gov/covid19/vaccines>

The US CDC has up to date information on COVID-19 vaccines:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/keythingstoknow.html>

It is important to remember that even after being vaccinated, you should continue to wear a mask, wash your hands, and watch your distance until the vaccine has been widely distributed.

In anticipation of the release of the COVID vaccines, we have updated the immunization policy to clarify who may consent for vaccines while children are in custody.

The Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) authorizes the resource parents to provide consent for routine medical services, such as immunizations, and expects that youth in care receive recommended vaccinations. Youth over the age of 14 years should be informed of the risks and benefits of the vaccine and have the opportunity to meet with their primary care provider if they have questions. In most cases, resource parents and/or DHHS caseworkers must accompany the youth to receive the vaccine. Any questions regarding the immunization policy and procedure should be directed to the DHHS caseworker for the youth placed in your home. There will be additional information provided by the CDC regarding immunizations for youth.

For your reference, the updated immunization policy is attached to this email and posted on OCFS' website. We hope that you will encourage all who are over the age of 16 in your home to get vaccinated in order to protect you, your family, and our community from the disease caused by the Coronavirus.

Once again, we thank you for all you are doing through this most difficult year.

Stay safe and be well.

Sincerely,

Bobbi Johnson
OCFS Associate Director of Child Welfare Service

Adrienne Carmack, MD
OCFS Medical Director