

PRESS RELEASE



Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine booster shot available

The Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC) and the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, with guidance from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Food and Drug Administration, will be offering Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine booster shots to people aged 65 years and older; people aged 18-64 years with underlying health conditions; and people aged 18-64 years who are at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational or institutional settings.

Individuals can obtain a booster shot of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine by walking into the COVID-19 mass vaccination site (i.e., Multi-Purpose Center), or through the CHCC Immunization Clinic, and requesting the third dose. Consent forms must be completed by patients at the time of vaccination for the booster shot. The consent forms will include a section in which the patient/vaccine recipient will self-attest to qualifying under any of the aforementioned categories and that they have already received two doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.

People 65 years and older and people aged 50-64 years with underlying medical conditions **should** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series. A full list of underlying medical conditions that qualify for this booster shot can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>.

People aged 18-49 years with underlying medical conditions and people aged 18-64 years who are at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational or institutional setting **may** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series, based on their individual benefits and risks. A list of occupations with an increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html>.

The Pfizer-BioNTech booster authorization applies to individuals whose primary series was the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. More data on the effectiveness and safety of the Moderna or Johnson & Johnson/Janssen booster shots are expected soon, and the CHCC will keep the public informed on the availability of Moderna and Johnson & Johnson/Janssen booster shots.

Additional populations may be recommended to receive a booster shot as more data becomes available. The COVID-19 vaccines approved and authorized in the U.S. continue to be effective at reducing the risk of severe disease, hospitalization, and death.

Reactions reported after getting the Pfizer-BioNTech booster shot were similar to the 2-shot primary series. Fatigue and pain at the injection site were the most commonly reported side effects, and overall, most side effects were mild to moderate. However, as with the 2-shot primary series, [serious side effects are rare but may occur](#).

Individuals who have questions should talk to their healthcare provider about their medical condition and whether getting a booster shot is appropriate for them.

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This press release may be found online at <http://www.chcc.gov.mp/pressrelease.html>.