

1-13-21

Vaccine access update and VAMS Q+A

Information about the state's vaccination program changes daily – more than daily. Below we try to capture what CCEH knows as of today.

This memo contains two parts:

- 1) General information about vaccine access for essential frontline staff and people experiencing homelessness.
- 2) DPH's answers to your questions about the VAMS system for scheduling vaccine appointments.

General information about vaccine access

Phase 1b timeline

The Governor's press conference on 1/11/21 clarified the first group within 1b would be people aged 75 and up. No timeline yet for essential frontline workers or people in congregate settings. Scheduling for people aged 75+ will take place through various means, including medical outreach and web-based registration. Watch this space:

<https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/COVID-19-Vaccination---Phases#phase1b>

Routes to the vaccine

- VAMS: most appropriate for employers to schedule their staff who have email, transportation, etc. Whether some clients will be scheduled in VAMS has not been settled.
- Onsite clinics: Governor's office and DPH will organize clinics for clients in congregate settings. Potentially also staff, subject to sufficient allocations (otherwise, staff can still be scheduled in VAMS). Expect LHDs and testing providers to be involved. DPH will be canvassing DOH, CCEH, and others to map out where sites are located and how many doses and staff to send to each.
- Hospital systems not in VAMS. Yale New Haven Health and Hartford Healthcare reportedly opted out of VAMS. If you have a working relationship with a provider that is opting out of VAMS, you are encouraged to reach out and see whether they can serve your clients and staff in the appropriate phase (If you do secure vaccine access in this way, I request you alert both CCEH and DOH to avoid duplication of efforts in our support to DPH planning and allocations)

Answers to questions about VAMS

Provider agencies report different experiences with VAMS, with some prompted to upload employee rosters during phase 1a and others receiving as yet no follow-up email from DPH or VAMS.

The following summarizes the most recent guidance from Krista Veneziano at DPH, in an email of 1-12-21, which updates and modifies previous communications from DPH to CCEH:

Whether an agency has been prompted already to upload a roster depends on how they responded to previous surveys or VAMS enrolment (may have indicated some staff met phase 1a criteria).

Organizations that had already completed a survey (including original DPH SurveyMonkey) but have not been asked to upload a roster will be receiving an email sometime this week asking them to complete a VAMS enrollment so additional information can be collected. That email should be going out sometime this week. For “sector category,” they should choose the “direct social and government services” sector from the drop down.

DPH asks that any homeless services providers not already registered in VAMS wait for the website to be updated with final, approved phase 1b information from the Governor’s committees on allocations and prioritization. This will be completed this week. For “sector category,” they should choose the “direct social and government services” sector from the drop down. They would then be prompted to upload rosters of staff who meet phase 1b criteria.