



New or updated information is in red and bold

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# Vaccine Eligibility Adjusted for BIPOC, Caregivers of Children with High-Risk Conditions

Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD announced changes to vaccine eligibility for two groups at Tuesday's press conference.

The first change is that parents or primary caregivers who are caring for children with certain high-risk conditions will be eligible for vaccination starting tomorrow (Wed., March 31).

"These children would be on our high-risk disease list due to their immunocompromised medically complex condition, and prioritized, if they were only old enough to qualify for a vaccine," Dr. Levine said. "We need to ensure these parents and caregivers remain healthy enough to care for their child, and that they not risk bringing the virus into the home."

Parents and primary caregivers of children with certain high-risk health conditions can make a vaccination appointment starting tomorrow by visiting <u>healthvermont.gov/MyVaccine</u>, or by calling 855-722-7878.

The second change is for Vermonters who are Black, Indigenous and people of color. Beginning Thursday (April 1), ALL members of the Vermont BIPOC community 16 years of age and older – as well as their family members – will now be eligible for vaccination.

They can make an appointment online at <u>healthvermont.gov/MyVaccine</u> or through our call center. Registrants would state they identify as BIPOC. These Vermonters can also register through one of the community clinics developed with our partners around the state.

Dr. Levine said there is an almost two-fold increase in risk for hospitalization among the BIPOC population. He also spoke to how the pace of vaccination for BIPOC continues to lag significantly behind, with a rate of 20.2% of the population having received at least one dose of vaccine, as compared with a rate of 33.4% among non-Hispanic whites.

"This is in spite of our ongoing efforts to offer vaccination of multigenerational households within the current age banding strategy and to engage our community partners in setting up community-based clinics," he said. "Nonetheless, it is unacceptable that this disparity remains for this population placed at higher risk."

#### New on healthvermont.gov

Household members of a person with COVID-19 are most likely to be identified as a close contact. They are also the type of contact most likely to become a case. Get more data about people who have been identified as close contacts in Vermont in the latest <u>Weekly</u> <u>Data Summary Spotlight</u>.

### If you have any symptoms, stay home and get tested for COVID-19

Interviews with people who have COVID-19 indicate that some assumed they had a cold or a sinus infection, instead of first thinking they might have COVID-19. The COVID-19 virus is still circulating in our communities, and the <u>only</u> way to know if you have it is to get tested.

Remember that <u>symptoms</u> can sometimes be mild, such as a headache, cough, fatigue or a runny nose. So, if you have even just one of these symptoms, it's best to get tested. It's also important to avoid going to work, school or other places until you receive a negative result. COVID-19 is a highly transmissible virus, and this is how we can each protect our loved ones and our communities.

Testing is important – In fact, the only way to know if you have COVID-19 is to be tested.

If you have symptoms, talk to your health care provider. They can refer you for testing. Even if you don't have symptoms, you can still have COVID-19 and not feel sick. If you don't have symptoms and want to get tested, there are <u>many test sites</u> now available around the state. It's free and easy! <u>Watch a video about what to expect</u>.

### **COVID-19 Activity in Vermont**

As of 12 p.m. on March 30, 2021 Data is updated daily.

Description	Number
New cases*	73 (19,109 total)
Currently hospitalized	25
Hospitalized in ICU	2
Hospitalized under investigation	1
Percent Positive (7-day average)	2%
People tested	354,301
Total tests	1,319,118
Total people recovered	15,754

Deaths+	225

Find more data on COVID-19 Activity at: <u>healthvermont.gov/currentactivity</u>.

## **COVID-19 Vaccine Data**

As of 12 p.m. on March 30, 2021 Data is updated Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Description	Number
Total people who have received least one dose of vaccine	202,317 (36.9% of population)
Total people who have received two doses of vaccine (completed)	116,275

Find more vaccine data on the COVID-19 Vaccine Dashboard: <u>healthvermont.gov/covid19-vaccine-data</u>.

### **Additional Resources About Vaccination and More**

- Find answers to your questions about the COVID-19 vaccine from the CDC: <a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html">www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html</a>.
- Get Vermont-specific information in our <u>Frequently Asked Questions</u>.
- Sign up for the COVID-19 Weekly Email Update.
- Find information sheets, posters and toolkits, as well as translated materials on our <u>Resources web page</u>.

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