



BROWN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

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Press Release

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COVID-19 Vaccination in Brown County

While all Minnesotans 16 and older will become eligible for COVID-19 vaccination Tuesday March 30th, not everyone will be immediately able to make an appointment. Vaccine shipments from the federal government will continue to increase over the coming weeks, but for now demand will still exceed supply.

As we expand eligibility to all Minnesotans, vaccine providers will continue to prioritize vaccine appointments for older Minnesotans, those with underlying health conditions, and those in frontline essential jobs. Minnesotans that carry the highest risk, will remain the top priority. Vaccinators in our area are primarily vaccinating those priority groups in Phase 1B and moving to Phase 1C followed by the general public.

For more information about the priority groups go to: <https://mn.gov/.../vaccine/whos-getting-vaccinated/index.jsp>

Phase 1b Tier 2

Essential Workers:

- Food processing facilities.

Populations at high risk for severe disease:

- People age 16-18 or older with Sickle cell, Down Syndrome, active cancer treatment, immunocompromised from organ transplant, oxygen-dependent chronic lung or health conditions.
- People with rare conditions or disabilities that put them at higher risk (e.g., muscular dystrophy)



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Phase 1b Tier 3

Essential Workers:

- Agriculture, additional school and childcare workers, airport staff, correctional settings, first responders, food production, food retail (grocery), food service, judicial system workers, manufacturing, postal service workers, public transit workers, public health workers.

Populations at high risk for severe disease:

- People age 45-64 years with one or more underlying medical conditions listed below
- People age 16-44 years with two or more underlying medical conditions listed below
- People age 50 years and older in multi-generational housing

Qualifying underlying health conditions:

- Active cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Down Syndrome
- Immunocompromised (HIV, bone marrow, chronic steroids for more than 30 days, immunodeficiency disease, or taking immunosuppressive medications)
- Heart conditions (heart failure, coronary artery disease, cardiomyopathies)
- Obesity-body mass index (BMI) greater than 30 kg/m²
- Pregnancy
- Sickle cell disease
- Type 1 or 2 diabetes

Phase 1 b Tier 4

Populations at high risk for severe disease:

- People age 16 or 18 years and older with any underlying medical condition listed below
- People age 50-64 years regardless of current health status.

Phase 1c

Essential Workers:

- Energy, finance, shelter/housing (construction), IT/communications, legal, media, public safety (engineers), transportation and logistics, water and wastewater.



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Brown County Public Health will continue to focus vaccination efforts on essential worker categories in 1B Tier 2 and 3 and 1C working primarily through employers and also with individuals.

Anyone in the previous phases including healthcare workers, caregivers, E-12 school staff & childcare, and those over 65 are still encouraged to get vaccinated. Vaccination is still open to those individuals as well.

Specific ways to access vaccination in Brown County:

Brown County Public Health will be posting links to clinics that are scheduled on Facebook and our website as they are open to the public. We will first be filling clinic appointments with priority essential worker groups and those individuals at highest risk. If appointments are still available they will be open to the general public.

If people in the priority groups need to be connected to a vaccinator please call 507-233-6820

New Ulm Medical Center - Allina Health in alignment with state guidance, continues to vaccinate for impact by focusing on patients and community members who are at greater risk from COVID-19, including people under age 65 with certain underlying health conditions. When those vaccinations are completed, Allina Health will be able to serve all patients age 16 and older. They expect that this will take a few more weeks. They will reach out in the coming weeks with more information. If you are on Allina Health's list of patients meeting current high risk medical criteria, when you are eligible, they will contact you. They will reach out directly by email, phone or letter to schedule your vaccination when you are eligible. Visit the COVID-19 vaccine information page on [AllinaHealth.org](https://www.allinahealth.org) for more information before calling the scheduling center or your provider.

Sleepy Eye Medical Center will be reaching out to their patient population in the priority groups first and then to those that have indicated interest in the vaccine. Individuals can call SEMC at 507-794-8453 or submit their contact information online at www.semedicalcenter.org. SEMC will contact patients when they are eligible to receive the vaccine.



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Pharmacies have the categories they are vaccinating on their websites when appointments are made.

Area Pharmacies - online appointments only

HyVee - <https://www.hy-vee.com/my-pharmacy/covid-vaccine>

Walmart - <https://www.goodrx.com/covid-19/walmart>

Thrifty White - <https://www.thriftywhite.com/covid19vaccine>

We recommend checking websites and links frequently

Brown County Public Health encourages all individuals interested in receiving the vaccine to also indicate your interest at the state site <https://vaccineconnector.mn.gov/>. The Minnesota Department of Health will also notify individuals when they are eligible through this website and indicate available sites for vaccination.

We encourage everyone to get the vaccine where it is first offered to you if it is logistically feasible. Both the Moderna and Pfizer products do require a 2nd dose and you are asked to return to the site of your 1st dose to obtain the 2nd dose.

While the scope of those we can serve is greatly widening, our vaccine allocations are not currently keeping up with demand. We are asking that the general public remain patient while all vaccine providers are working diligently to get vaccine out to all who have an interest

We are making progress with COVID 19 vaccination on Brown County. As of March 26th the Minnesota Department of Health is reporting that 34.4% of people in Brown County have been vaccinated with one dose and 21.7% have completed their vaccine series. A little over 89% of the 65 plus population in Brown County has received at least one dose of the COVID 19 Vaccine. The Minnesota COVID 19 Vaccine data dashboard can be found at <https://mn.gov/covid19/vaccine/data/index.jsp>.

Even when individuals are fully vaccinated they still need to mask when in public and maintain social distancing, wash their hands, stay home when they are sick, and get tested if they have even one symptom of COVID 19. We do not yet have enough information about how the vaccine is protecting people to move forward without these precautions in place. We still have many more people to vaccinate in Brown County.