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Director and State Public Health Officer

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency  
California Department of Public Health



GAVIN NEWSOM  
Governor

### Health Care Information Notice

March 11, 2021

**To:** Licensed Clinicians

**Subject:** COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility for People with High-Risk Medical Conditions or Disabilities

This notice is to inform clinicians that people with certain significant, high-risk medical conditions or disabilities will become eligible for COVID-19 vaccination statewide on March 15, 2021. The California Department of Public Health requests that you reach out to your patients that meet the eligibility requirements listed below about their vaccination eligibility to help save the lives of those who are at high-risk of death and severe complications from COVID-19.

The national supply of the vaccine remains limited, so appointments for the estimated 4.4 million Californians with these conditions or disabilities will not immediately be available to all who are eligible. Providers should use their best judgment in identifying and prioritizing those who meet the eligibility requirements.

People ages 16-64 can be eligible if they are deemed to be at the very highest risk to get very sick from COVID-19:

EITHER because they have one or more of the following severe health conditions:

- **Cancer**, current with weakened immune system
- **Chronic kidney disease**, stage 4 or above
- **Chronic pulmonary disease**, oxygen dependent
- **Down syndrome**
- **Solid organ transplant**, leading to a weakened immune system
- **Pregnancy**
- **Sickle cell disease**
- **Heart conditions**, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies (but not hypertension)
- **Severe obesity** (Body Mass Index  $\geq 40$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>)
- **Type 2 diabetes mellitus** with hemoglobin A1c level greater than 7.5%



**OR if**, as a result of a developmental or other significant, high-risk disability, one or more of the following criteria applies:

- A COVID-19 infection is likely to result in severe life-threatening illness or death; OR
- Acquiring COVID-19 will limit the individual's ability to receive ongoing care or services vital to their well-being and survival; OR
- Providing adequate and timely COVID care will be particularly challenging as a result of the individual's disability.

These three criteria include people with a range of significant physical or behavioral disabilities. Examples include: (a) people with serious mental illness (SMI) or serious substance use disorder (SUD), (b) enrolled consumers of Regional Centers, Independent Living Centers, In Home Supportive Services, Community Based Adult Services/Adult Day Health Centers, Medi-Cal HIV/AIDS Waiver, Medi-Cal Home and Community-Based Alternatives Waiver, Medi-Cal Assisted Living Waiver, Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly, California Children's Services Program (if the child is 16-21 years old), and California Genetically Handicapped Persons Program.

To protect confidentiality, verification documentation of the diagnosis or type of disability is not required but instead anyone meeting the eligibility requirements will be asked to sign a self-attestation that they meet the criteria for high-risk medical conditions or disabilities.

For more information on how and where these patients can access the vaccine, please see:

- [Fact Sheet for Public](https://cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/vaccine-high-risk-factsheet.aspx)  
([cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/vaccine-high-risk-factsheet.aspx](https://cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/vaccine-high-risk-factsheet.aspx))
- [CDPH updated Provider Bulletin](https://cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Provider-Bulletin-2-12-21.aspx)  
([cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Provider-Bulletin-2-12-21.aspx](https://cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/COVID-19/Provider-Bulletin-2-12-21.aspx))

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tomás Aragón". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tomás J. Aragón, M.D., Dr.P.H.,  
Director and State Health Officer