

February 26, 2021



Dear California Vaccination Provider:

Thank you for your work administering COVID-19 vaccinations to vulnerable Californians. We know this effort has meant a significant investment of time and resources in the earliest weeks of COVID-19 vaccinations, and we appreciate your dedication to helping end the pandemic in our State.

Since mid-December, we have learned important lessons. Our early vaccination plan laid the groundwork for COVID-19 vaccinations at the local level, but we must build a more robust statewide network to accelerate the administration of vaccines and ensure more equitable access.

On January 26, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced a series of improvements to the State's vaccination plan aimed at making it easier for people to know when they are eligible for vaccination and how to make an appointment. He also directed State officials to enhance California's vaccine network to make it capable of administering COVID-19 vaccines more rapidly to more Californians equitably, efficiently, and safely.

In accordance with the Governor's direction, the state has asked Blue Shield of California to be the State's Third Party Administrator to build an enhanced state vaccine network. Under this plan, the State will allocate vaccines directly to providers to maximize distribution efficiency and equity.

At the state's direction, Blue Shield of California continues to consult with leaders of each local health jurisdiction, healthcare providers and others in our combined efforts to address gaps and help tackle this pandemic together. We are also contracting with existing and new providers to build an enhanced state vaccine network capable of delivering vaccinations at the scale needed in our state.

The following are key guiding principles as we transition to this new model:

- Deliver capacity to ensure California can meet the goal of vaccinating 25 million people by the summer of 2021;
- Build on the current system's existing capacity and vaccination processes that are working well while enhancing state oversight of the vaccine supply and accountability for all doses;
- Promote equity in vaccine delivery by supporting vulnerable communities with resources to ensure access and reduce barriers to vaccinations;
- Simplify access to vaccines with a single vaccination portal for all Californians to make appointments and support unified statewide approach to ensure consistency in prioritizations for vaccines by the State;
- Ensure appropriate allocations across the state to maximize efficiency in the delivery of vaccines to all Californians.

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[blueshieldca.com](https://blueshieldca.com)

601 12<sup>th</sup> Street | Oakland, CA 94607

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Beginning on March 1, 2021 and over the next few weeks, we will be transitioning to the new State-led approach in three phases.

- The first phase of the transition involves a three-week process where the TPA will begin implementing State-approved vaccine allocation to counties and providers. Providers and local health jurisdictions may choose to continue in their roles as vaccine providers by contracting with the TPA. The agreement includes using the state's MyTurn portal for scheduling vaccination appointments and reporting data to the TPA and the state to provide daily visibility about the vaccine network's operation. Providers interested in becoming part of the network may email [CovidVaccineNetwork@BlueShieldca.com](mailto:CovidVaccineNetwork@BlueShieldca.com).
- During the second phase, the allocation will begin to follow the State's equity and priority directives, and all providers and local health jurisdictions will be required to follow state prioritization guidance (i.e., age, sectors, health condition, etc.). We will continue our outreach and onboarding local health jurisdictions and providers to the state vaccine network.
- In the third phase of the transition, beginning March 15, the TPA will manage all providers in the network and assume responsibility for implementing the State-approved allocation of all vaccine doses provided to California.

It's important to note that local health jurisdictions will continue to be key partners with the state and the TPA, helping us understand which providers are vaccinating equitably, efficiently, and effectively.

We recognize this transition is happening quickly and that it represents a change for providers. However, as the federal government prepares to ramp up the availability of vaccines in coming weeks and months, we are aiming to build a provider network here in California that is only constrained by the number of vaccines we receive.

Thank you for your patience as we all work together to ensure that Californians receive vaccinations as efficiently, equitably, and as quickly as possible. Your work administering the COVID-19 vaccine is saving lives. We are grateful for your efforts and look forward to working with you in the weeks and months ahead.

For more information, please call the CDPH COVID Provider Call Center at (833) 502-1245 or send an email to [covidcallcenter@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:covidcallcenter@cdph.ca.gov).

Yours Sincerely,



Aliza Arjoyan  
Senior Vice President, Provider Partnerships & Network Management  
Blue Shield of California – State of California's Third Party Administrator