

A close-up photograph of a glass vaccine vial with a blue rubber stopper. The vial is tilted, and a needle is inserted into the stopper. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue. The vial's label is partially visible, showing a barcode and the text "COVID-19 vaccine" and "Injection only".

CHOICE-DRIVEN

**COVID-19
VACCINE**

PLAN

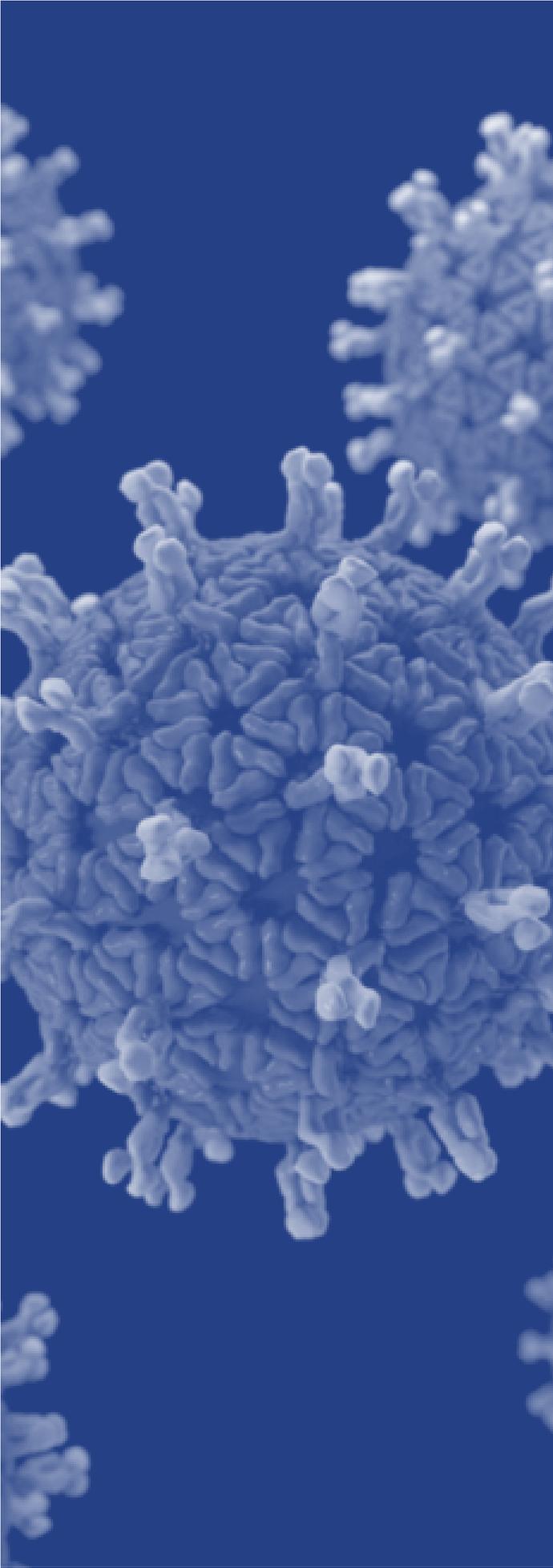


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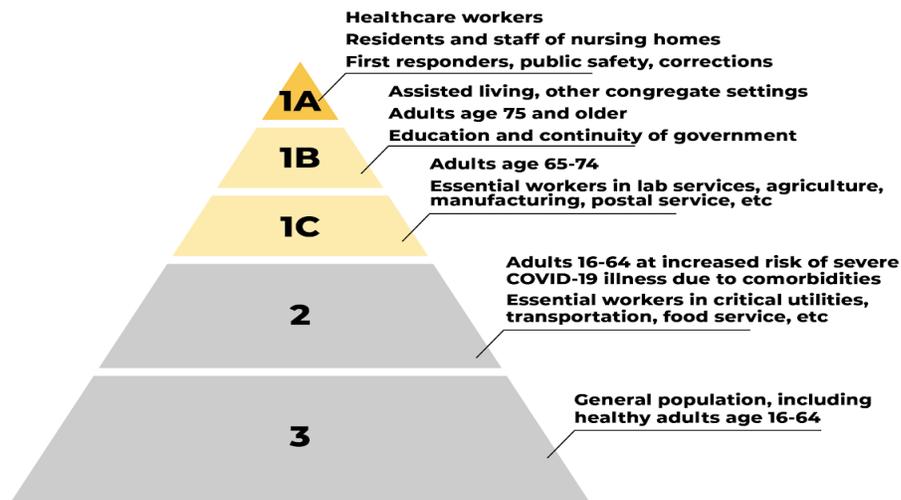
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INTRODUCTION

In response to the coronavirus pandemic and to increase probability for people to remain healthy, EPIC massed a committee that developed a vaccination plan for those supported and their support teams. Committee members represented EPIC’s administrative, nursing, human resources, residential, and day supports teams.

Determined through Maryland’s governor’s office, EPIC falls under the category 1B as an agency that provides congregate settings. The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) forwarded EPIC’s group home addresses and contact information to CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) where contractors such as Walgreens and CVS were assigned sites to host immunization clinics.

Figure 1: Prioritization Chart for Immunization in Maryland



Vaccine prioritization subject to change. Current as of January 5, 2021.

Our Position

Through board acknowledgement and consent, EPIC is taking a choice-driven approach regarding COVID vaccination. However, in accordance with our duty to provide and maintain a workplace that is free of known hazards, we encourage employees to receive this vaccination to minimize the risk of infectious disease in our workplace.

EPIC is implementing a voluntary COVID vaccination program effective 01/18/2021. Employees who chose to be vaccinated may obtain the vaccination wherever they choose; however, EPIC is partnering with CVS and Walgreens who will host COVID-19 Immunization Clinics at EPIC facilities. Additionally, Kaiser Permanente, EPICs health insurance provider,

offers COVID vaccinations to members. The vaccine is free of charge to people supported and team members at EPIC.

A vaccination schedule will be created and communicated regarding who will provide the vaccine and where employees and people supported can receive the vaccine. This communication will occur via EPIC's internal communication system, CMS and/or via EPIC email. A vaccination schedule will be created for staff to ensure that services for people supported are not interrupted, thus we will make every attempt to stagger the times of immunization.

Staff that choose to be vaccinated should [email EPIC's Human Resource](#) Director, Immaculate Anyangwe. Although this is not an obligation, it is requested that staff additionally notify EPIC's Human Resource Director should they take the vaccine outside of EPIC to allow tracking and recording. Note that all such records will be kept confidentially as per EPIC's policy.

1. PREPARATION

EPIC's COVID-19 Vaccine Committee researched the Center for Disease Control (CDC), MD Department of Health (MDgov), information gathered by MACS (Maryland Association of Community Services), fact sheets on the Moderna vaccine (Moderna) and Pfizer vaccine (PfizerBioNTech), and reviewed information provided by Walgreens (WalgreensLTCF) and CVS (CVSLTCF).

In preparation to educate, determine people to be immunized, and establishing clinics that will administer the COVID-19 vaccine, EPIC has/will:

- **Communicate our Plan:** Week two [2] of January, 2021, EPIC memorandums were issued to [staff](#) and [people supported/guardians](#) regarding EPIC's vaccination plan. Extended team members, inclusive of families and the CCS were copied.
- **Complete VARs** (vaccine administration records): VARs are required to be completed and issued on anyone receiving the vaccination. The form will collect the legal consent to receive the vaccine. The form must be completed prior to any immunization as is divided into sections.
 - **Section A1 of the VAR must be completed before the clinic date**

Fill before clinic

Vaccine Administration Record (VAR)

Informed Consent for Vaccination in Long Term Care Facility (LTCF)

Walgreens

SECTION A-1 Please print clearly.

First name: _____ Last name: _____

Date of birth: _____ Age: _____ Gender: Female Male Phone: _____

LTCF Name: _____ Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP code: _____ Patient Email address: _____

- Sections A2 and B1 must be completed the day of the clinic (COVID screening)
- People supported – Program Managers will assist in the completion of VARs for people on their caseloads. Should a person supported have a durable power of health care attorney, or legal guardian, he/she must sign the consent section prior to a person being immunized.
- Support team – staff are responsible for completing the VAR for themselves.

- **Establish Schedules:** Section of 3, of this plan, will detail EPIC’s scheduling of Vaccine Clinics, hosted by Walgreens and CVS. The headcount for each clinic must be made in advance of the scheduled immunization day. Thus, anyone wanting the vaccine, must report their actions to HR and complete section A1 of the VAR. *Clinics are slated to begin as soon as late January.*

Side Effects

As part of our preparation, EPIC’s COVID-19 Vaccine Committee reviewed information related to possible side effects of the vaccine. Our research has shown the possibility of a severe allergic reaction. In cases of severe allergic reaction, a person would usually see signs within a few minutes to one hour after getting a dose of the Moderna and Pfizer COVID-19 Vaccines.

- Signs of a severe allergic reaction (CDCAllergic) – Difficulty breathing • Swelling of your face and throat • A fast heartbeat • A bad rash all over your body • Dizziness and weakness. As with any severe reaction, activating 911 is critical. Other side effects that may occur from the injection or people considered high risk could be possible.
- Vaccine side effects – Pain at the injection site, tiredness, fatigue, headache, muscle pain/aches, chills, joint pain, swollen lymph nodes in the same arm as the injection, nausea, vomiting, and fever.
- High Risk persons – People who are Immunocompromised and those with history of Severe Allergies and/or past Anaphylaxis are not encouraged to take the vaccine, they are encouraged to seek advice from their medical doctor before taking the vaccine. (CDCHighRisk)
- Injection site reactions – pain, tenderness and swelling of the lymph nodes in the same arm of the injection, swelling (hardness), and redness
- General side effects: fatigue, headache, muscle pain, joint pain, chills, nausea and vomiting, and fever. There is a remote chance that the Moderna (CDCModerna) and Pfizer (CDCPfizer) COVID-19 Vaccines could cause a severe allergic reaction.

2. PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Although the COVID-19 vaccine is offered and encouraged, we do not expect the vaccine provide full protection and immunity. As such, EPIC will continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic as we continue to learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work in real-world conditions.

The CDC continues to update the public by sharing information via their website. EPIC recommends you visit the site often to obtain the most updated information on the coronavirus and the [COVID-19 Vaccines](#).

As recommended by the CDC, EPIC also encourages people to:



In addition to mask wearing, social distancing, and minimizing/avoiding crowds, EPIC will additionally follow preventive measures that have been helpful for us, that include education sharing with our team and followers:

- **Other PPE Usage** – gloves, eye protection, gowns
- **Handwashing & Sanitizing**
- **Disinfecting Surfaces**
- **Temperature Taking**
- **Vaccination**
- **Quarantining/Isolating Sites**
- **No Staff Sharing**
- **Monthly COVID Analyses**
- **Training & Educational Sharing**
- **Discouraging Unnecessary Domestic and International Travel (CDCTravel)**

3. SCHEDULING

The scheduling of Vaccine Clinics will be coordinated with Walgreens and CVS. EPIC has seventeen [17] sites: 16 group homes and 1 day program. EPIC’s assignments were pre-selected, assumably by CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services). Tabled below identifies the pharmacy that is assigned to a site that will host the clinic. We have tentative dates and assignments for some sites. Email notification will be made to those affected at a later date for sites unassigned, amended dates, and/or sites that do not have a clinic date. You can visit EPIC’s COVID Vaccination Clinic Calendar by [clicking this link](#).

Unassigned (as of 1/14/21)	CVS	Walgreens
Canfield	Baker	Kemmerton
Hanover	South Barnaby	Kennison
Plaza	Woodrow	Nottingham
Queen E.		Pickford
Stonybrook		San Juan A&B
		Spring Terr.
		Thorpe
		Twisting

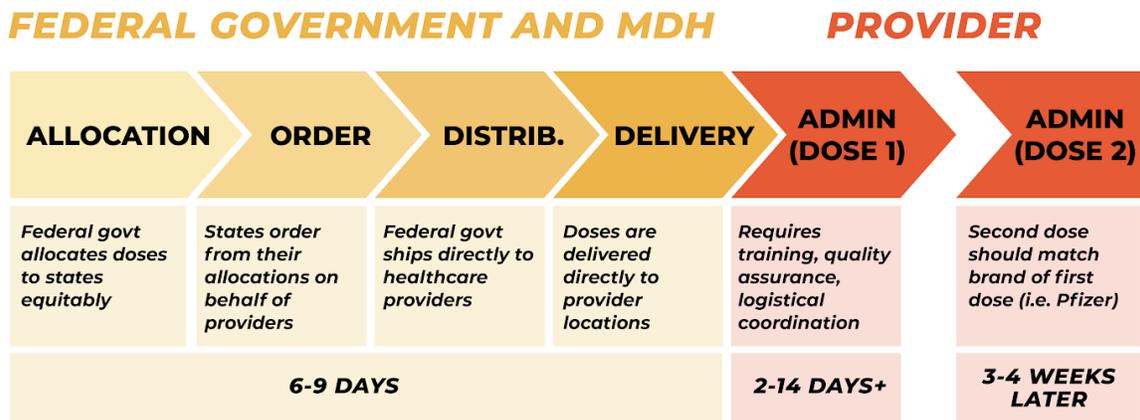
EPIC’s goal is to stagger the immunization within the homes/sites to minimize everyone getting the vaccine at the same time as a means to manage possibilities of side-effects people may experience.

Because we are staggering immunization and the process will be choice-driven, EPIC communicated with our healthcare partners, Walgreens and CVS to build into our protocol options staff and people supported have, should they decline the vaccine during the original clinic dates. Both companies have been contracted to hold only three [3] clinics per site. Should a staff person not take advantage of the opportunities at Walgreens or CVS on the specific dates of the clinic, staff would need to get immunized using other means such as personal insurance or local health departments.

Clinic dates will be forwarded to the people supported/guardian and staff as soon as possible. The method of notice will be email, text, and/or phone calls. The date of each clinic has been assigned for some sites. Upon receiving a date for other sites, communication will be issued immediately.

4. VACCINATION PROCESS

EPIC will follow the lead of Maryland’s governor. Below is a chart that reflects the vaccine distribution process at the state level. (MDgov)



Clinic Process and Locations

Upon EPIC receiving a date that each clinic will be hosted, the first dose will be administered on that day. A second dose will be scheduled to occur three [3] to four [4] weeks later. The second dose would be administered at the same location, by the same contractor (i.e. CVS), and using the same brand of vaccine (i.e. Moderna).

All clinics will be at EPIC homes. The date that each home is scheduled can be found on EPIC’s internal SharePoint system. [Click here](#) to access the COVID Vaccination Clinic Calendar.

All EPIC employees and people supported need to be aware that on the day of the immunization, **[plan for a 15-minute observation period after each immunization.](#)**

Each home must have a specific setup that allows social distancing and space for the vaccination process to occur. Proper setup of each home is the responsibility of the residential team. Guidelines on how the clinic site should be structured can be found by [clicking this link](#).

Clinic Day

Within one week of the scheduled clinic, a person that has chosen to be immunized will have section A1 of the VAR completed and submitted to the assigned hosting contractor: Walgreens or CVS. On the day of the clinic, the following will happen:

- Only attend the clinic if you intend on receiving an immunization. You will **NOT** be vaccinated, and **SHOULD NOT** attend the clinic if:
 - You are feeling sick, have a fever, or are exhibiting any respiratory symptoms.
 - If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last two [2] weeks.
- If able, all participants must wear a facemask or face covering if they are able commuting to and from the clinic and throughout the duration, they are in the clinic area, or while the immunizer is in their living area.
- When waiting for the immunization, participants will need to practice appropriate social distancing guidelines, maintaining at least a 6ft distance from others.
- Clinic team members (Walgreens & CVS) will assess for signs of illness which may include asking screening questions (if recipient is able) or taking participant's temperature using the touch-free digital thermometer. Immunization will be deferred if participants are sick or have a fever.
- If possible, participants should wear clothing that allows the immunizer to easily access the shoulder area for a more efficient vaccination process (i.e. t-shirt and/or easy to remove layers).
- The facility will be responsible for providing any additional support for patients requiring special assistance.
- Clinic team members (Walgreens & CVS) will fill out a shot card for each recipient of the vaccine, it is critical that EPIC keeps these for each person supported. If a person moves out of EPIC, we will ensure the card is part of his/her records.

After Clinic

After a person supported and/or EPIC Team Member is immunized with the COVID-19 vaccine, it will be important to observe for any side effects. Some possible side effects are listed under the [preparation section](#) of this plan. Should an adverse event (side effect) occur with an EPIC Team Member, contact your health care provider immediately. Also, inform EPIC's Human Resource director.

For adverse events (side effects) experienced by a person that receives supports, the following must occur:

- **Notify EPIC's Nurse:** For people supported, the EPIC staff must notify the assigned EPIC registered nurse, immediately. Nurses will follow through as they normally would for assessing care.

- **Document the Side Effect(s):** All documentation describing the side effect must be logged in CMS as a health note prior to the staff's shift ending.
- **External Communication:** EPIC's general reporting policy will be followed for reporting issues to guardians, families, CCS, etc. for incidents involving people supported. Additionally, a rep from EPIC's Quality Enhancement Department will:
 - report the incident to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS). VAERS is co-managed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Additionally, after the clinics have finished, Walgreens and CVS will provide EPIC a report with the data needed to meet the reporting requirements of the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) for all recipients (people supported and staff) of the vaccine within 72 hours of each clinic conducted. This report will be maintained under EPIC's Human Resource records.

5. VACCINATION TRACKING

EPIC has an efficient record-keeping system to keep track of people supported and employees who have taken the vaccine. Record keeping is on a spreadsheet that provides full name, assigned vaccination company, date of 1st and 2nd dose. Additional information is records for people support regarding symptoms after dosages to ensure that any change in the person's condition is reported to the delegating nurse immediately.

VACCINATION TRACKING Steps for Employees:

- Once you have completed the first dose of the COVID vaccine
- Send a copy of the vaccination record to HR (ianyangwe@epic-smvi.org) for confidential record keeping.
- Notify HR when you are schedule for the second dose of the COVID vaccine.
- Once you have completed the second dose
- Send a copy of the vaccination record to HR (ianyangwe@epic-smvi.org) for confidential record keeping.
- Notify HR if you experience more severe symptoms.

Already Immunized:

If an employee has already received the COVID-19 Vaccination through a means outside of EPIC, we ask that he/she inform EPIC's Human Resources Director for tracking purposes. Immaculate Anyangwe can be reached via email at ianyangwe@epic-smvi.org.

6. WRAP-UP

In accordance with our duty to provide and maintain a workplace that is free of known hazards, although not mandated, we encourage employees to receive the COVID-19 Vaccination to minimize the risk of infectious disease in our workplace.

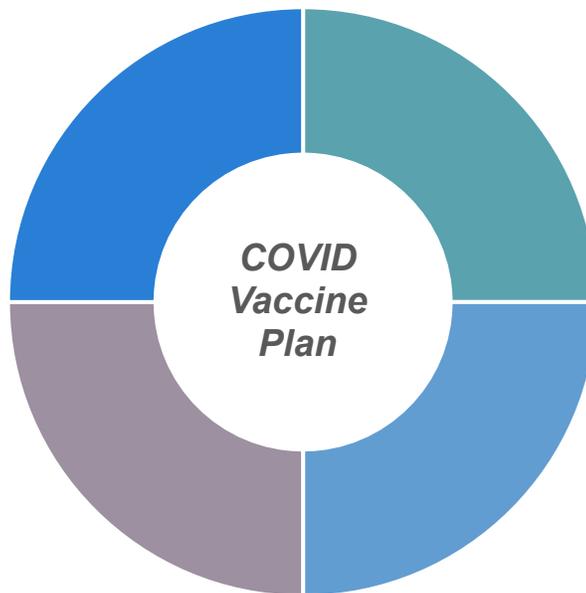
A quick summary of EPIC’s plan and steps needed are charted below:

Make your CHOICE known

- [Email HR](#) if you want a vaccine
- Check the [COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic Calendar](#) for a date
- Register by completing a VAR and contacting your supervisor

Track Results

- Observe and document side effects
- HR to track employees that receive immunization
- QE to track immunization of people supported



1st Vaccination

- The day of the clinic is a COVID screening (section A2 of the VAR)
- No vaccine if feeling sick or COVID+ two weeks prior to clinic
- Plan for 15-minute observation after your vaccine

2nd Vaccination

- Same precautions as 1st vaccine
 - Must be taken at least 21 to 28 days after the 1st vaccine
-

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