

NEWS RELEASE

**Ontario Prepares to Accelerate Rollout as Vaccine Supply Increases
Increased Allocations to Hot Spot Communities to Help Stop the Spread of COVID-19 and Save Lives**

April 29, 2021
Ministry of Health

TORONTO — In response to an expected increase in vaccine supply from the federal government, the Ontario government is preparing to ramp up its rollout of COVID-19 vaccines to further support at-risk communities. This includes a targeted commitment to allocate 50 per cent of upcoming vaccine shipments to hot spot communities as identified by postal code, to help decrease COVID-19 transmission and hospitalizations.

Despite an unstable vaccine supply to date, the province has built a strong foundation for its vaccine rollout, with five million doses administered, and over 4.6 million adults having received at least one dose.

Approximately 800,000 doses of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine are expected to arrive in Ontario per week at the start of May, ramping up to 940,000 doses per week by the end of May. This reliable increase in vaccine supply allows the province to further accelerate its vaccine rollout and get more shots into arms.

“Ontario’s vaccine rollout is continuing to focus on getting vaccines to those most at risk” said Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. “With a stable and reliable supply of vaccines on the way, we will continue expanding access to the vaccine in communities across the province, especially those areas that continue to be hit hardest by COVID-19. The best vaccine remains the first one you’re offered, and I strongly encourage everyone to sign up as soon as it’s their turn.”

Based on the increased vaccine allocations Ontario is expecting in May, the province will increase the supply of COVID-19 vaccines to hot spot communities by over one million doses through a targeted, time-limited response designed to reduce COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths in these areas.

During the weeks of May 3 and May 10, 50 per cent of vaccine allocations will be allocated to hot spots targeting mobile teams, pop-up clinics, mass immunization clinics, hospitals, primary care and pharmacies.

This approach will not take away vaccines from other public health unit regions, whose allocations will remain the same as previously planned and will increase later in May. Public health units can use local knowledge to ramp up capacity and effectively target hot spots, whether provincially identified or otherwise.

Due to a predictable and increased vaccine supply from the federal government, the province will be able to further expand delivery channels in the coming weeks to vaccinate more Ontarians faster. To support this, the government has developed an anticipated schedule to expand eligibility to receive the COVID-19 vaccine throughout May, with individuals aged 18 and older eligible to book through the provincial booking system as early as the week of May 24, 2021.

As the next step in Ontario’s vaccine rollout, effective April 30, at 8:00 a.m., individuals aged 55 and over are eligible to book a vaccine appointment. This same day, a pilot will launch through select pharmacy locations in hot spot communities to administer the Pfizer vaccine to individuals aged 55 and over. Eight stores in Peel and eight in Toronto will participate in this pilot, with each location receiving approximately 150 doses per week to help Ontario continue to grow provincewide capacity to vaccinate as many individuals as quickly as possible. This is expected to expand to additional public health units later in May following evaluation of the program and as supply allows. Pharmacies will continue to use their own booking system for appointments.

In addition, the first employer-operated workplace clinics are on track to begin operating this week in hot spot communities within Peel Region. Maple Lodge Farms and Maple Leaf Foods have begun vaccinating employees in partnership with Peel Public Health and Amazon preparing to do the same. All three workplace clinics will also offer access to vaccines to the local community. Ontario will continue to work with employers who have expressed an interest in hosting workplace clinics to assess if they meet **the criteria** and help facilitate engagement with local public health units.

“With the increase in vaccine supplies, workplace vaccination clinics have begun this week and we are focusing our immunization efforts in areas where COVID-19 is spreading rapidly,” said Solicitor General Sylvia Jones. “As we move closer to accessing a more stable supply of vaccines from the federal government, we must do all we can to save lives and reduce hospitalizations by staying home and following public health measures.”

Quick Facts

- As of April 28, 2021, at 8:00 p.m., five million vaccine doses have been administered across the province, with over 91 per cent of Ontario residents aged 80 and over having received at least one dose and 38.5 per cent of the population aged 18 and over having received at least one dose. More than 88 per cent of residents aged 75 to 79 have now received their first shot. Over 368,000 Ontarians are fully immunized including 94 per cent of long-term care residents.
- Ontario is dramatically ramping up vaccination rates as supply increases. The province administered the first million doses in 81 days after the start of the vaccination, the second million doses in 17 days after reaching the first milestone, the third million doses in 13 days after reaching the second milestone, 11 days to surpass four million and eight days to reach five million doses administered.
- In April, the province received 1,584,180 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, 706,300 doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine and 539,200 doses of the Moderna vaccine. The province is expecting 4,089,150 doses of Pfizer in May, 388,100 doses of Moderna for the week of May 10 and is waiting for confirmation of shipments for AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson.
- Eligible groups can use Ontario’s **vaccine booking system** to find out how to schedule an appointment, or can call the Provincial Vaccine Booking Line number at 1-833-943-3900. For general inquiries, individuals can call the Provincial Vaccine Information Line number at 1-888-999-6488. The Provincial Vaccine Booking Line and Information Line are open Monday to Sunday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and are capable of providing assistance in 300 languages.
- Ontarians who are now eligible to book their vaccine appointment are asked to be patient, as it could take time for them to receive an appointment. Public health units are responsible for managing and overseeing the distribution and administration of vaccines for their entire region, and supply may be limited at times as a result of high demand.

Additional Resources

- [Phase Two Schedule for COVID-19 Vaccine Booking Eligibility](#)
- [Ontario Expands COVID-19 Vaccination Booking to Individuals 45 and Over in Hot Spot Communities](#)
- [Select Ontario Pharmacies Offering 24/7 COVID-19 Vaccinations](#)
- [Ontario Moving to Phase Two of COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan](#)
- [Populations Eligible for Phase Two Vaccination](#)
- [Guidance for Prioritization of Phase 2 Populations for COVID-19 Vaccination](#)
- [Ontario Helping People Get their COVID-19 Vaccination](#)
- For up-to-date information on the populations currently eligible for vaccination and instructions on how to book an appointment when you are eligible, visit Ontario’s [vaccine webpage](#).
- Eligible individuals can schedule a vaccine appointment by visiting [Ontario.ca/bookvaccine](#), or by calling the Provincial Vaccine Booking Line number at 1-833-943-3900.
- Individuals aged 40 and over can visit [ontario.ca/pharmacycovidvaccine](#) to find a participating pharmacy and can contact the pharmacy to make an appointment for COVID-19 vaccination.
- For resources in multiple languages to help local communication efforts in responding to COVID-19, visit Ontario’s [COVID-19 communication resources webpage](#).

- Visit Ontario's [website](#) to learn more about how the province continues to protect the people of Ontario from COVID-19.