

Memorial Hermann Health Plan (MHHP) is actively monitoring the global COVID-19 pandemic including guidance from the Texas Department of State Health Services and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Below is information about policies and procedures that Memorial Hermann Health Plan has implemented that focus on the health and safety of our colleagues, customers, members and patients.

For more information about the virus, please visit the CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov>) or the Texas Department of State Health Services (<https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/>)

**The content below is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.*

VACCINE FAQs

Will there be any out-of-pocket costs for MHHP members that receive a COVID-19 vaccine?

No. MHHP members in Commercial and Medicare *Advantage* plans will not have to pay any out-of-pocket costs for a COVID-19 vaccine. For Medicare beneficiaries, CMS will cover the full cost of the vaccine, including those in a Medicare *Advantage* plan.

Will MHHP cover the cost of the vaccine for members regardless of its administration by an in- or out-of-network pharmacy or provider?

Yes, MHHP will cover COVID-19 vaccine administration fees without cost-sharing, for both in- and out-of-network providers, for Commercial and Medicare *Advantage* members. CMS has indicated it will pay for the cost of the vaccine for all Medicare beneficiaries, including those in a Medicare *Advantage* plan.

Where can MHHP members go to get vaccinated?

COVID-19 vaccinations will be available at pharmacies, as well as doctors' offices at other clinical sites of care. The map of Texas COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Locations can be found here:

<https://txdshs.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=91ac7fb5e5fd47e7ada4acfe4a05920a>

Can children under the age of 16 receive the vaccine?

MHHP will follow the guidance provided by the CDC and FDA regarding the age of eligibility to receive the vaccine.

How would a COVID-19 vaccine work?

Different types of vaccines work in different ways to offer protection. But every type of vaccine works by teaching our bodies how to make cells that trigger an immune response. That immune response, which produces antibodies, is what protects us from getting infected if the real virus enters our bodies.

Currently, there are three main types of COVID-19 vaccines that are or soon will be undergoing large-scale (Phase 3) clinical trials in the United States:

- mRNA vaccines
- Protein subunit vaccines
- Vector vaccines

COVID-19 vaccines do not use the live virus and cannot give you COVID-19. The vaccine does not alter your DNA. COVID-19 vaccination will help protect you by creating an immune response without having to experience sickness.

Learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work on the Understanding How COVID-19 Vaccines Work section of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website.

Is getting the vaccine safe?

Safety is a top priority while federal partners work to make COVID-19 vaccines available. The new COVID-19 vaccines have been evaluated in tens of thousands of volunteers during clinical trials. The vaccines are only authorized for use if they are found to be safe. Even though they found no safety issues during the clinical trials, CDC and other federal partners will continue to monitor the new vaccines. They watch out for serious side effects (or “adverse events”) using vaccine safety monitoring systems, like the new V-safe After Vaccination Health Checker app:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/vsafe.html>

For the most up-to-date information, see the Vaccine Safety section of the CDC website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety.html#further>

Who will get the vaccine first?

Federal and state authorities are developing guidelines to prioritize vulnerable populations in the first phase of the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. These groups include:

- Phase 1a: health care workers and residents and staff of long-term care facilities
- Phase 1b: frontline essential workers and adults 75 years of age and older
- Phase 1c: adults 65-74 years of age, individuals age 16-64 with high-risk medical conditions, and other essential workers

While the timeline for each of these phases is not yet known, vaccines may be available to the general population as soon as March or April.

Are MHHP members in long-term care facilities eligible to get the COVID-19 vaccine in Phase 1a?

While the first phase of COVID-19 vaccine distribution includes long-term care facilities, each state determines who to prioritize for the vaccine administration, based on the guidelines provided by the federal government. Additionally, the delivery of the vaccine is managed by contractors that have entered into agreements with the CDC to participate in the Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program.

For more information on State of Texas specific vaccine strategy, visit the Department of State Health Services online: [COVID-19 Vaccine Information \(texas.gov\)](https://www.dshs.texas.gov/covid-19/vaccine)

Memorial Hermann *Advantage* HMO is provided by Memorial Hermann Health Plan, Inc., a Medicare Advantage organization with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in this plan depends on contract renewal.

All Commercial HMO products are underwritten by Memorial Hermann Commercial Health Plan, Inc.

All Commercial PPO products are underwritten by Memorial Hermann Health Insurance Company.

All Hybrid products are administered by Memorial Hermann Health Solutions, Inc.

Memorial Hermann *Advantage* and Memorial Hermann Health Plan comply with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

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