

March 2021

Aetna Better Health of Louisiana (ABHLA) advises providers of the following alert, which was issued on March 18, 2021 by the Louisiana Department of Health Emergency Operations Center (LDH EOC) Louisiana Health Alert Network (LA HAN) for the Louisiana Department of Health.

### Louisiana expands COVID-19 vaccine eligibility to Phase 1b, Tier 2, all essential workers are now eligible

The State of Louisiana is expanding COVID-19 vaccine eligibility to Phase 1b, Tier 2, which makes all essential workers eligible as of Monday, March 22, 2021. All persons currently eligible in Phases 1a and 1b, Tier 1 remain eligible.

In addition to existing eligibility guidelines, Tier 2 includes individuals aged 18 and up (or 16 and up for Pfizer vaccine only) who meet the following criteria:

- Higher Education faculty and staff
- Food and agricultural workers
- Food service (restaurant) workers, hotel workers, and other hospitality workers
- Judiciary workers
- Postal workers
- Manufacturing workers
- Grocery store workers
- Transportation workers including river pilots
- Water and wastewater workers
- Energy workers
- Bank tellers
- Construction workers
- Clergy
- IT and Telecommunications workers
- Media workers
- Public safety engineers/workers
- Public health workers
- Frontline government workers
- Child, youth, and family service workers
- In-home caregivers (including paid and unpaid caregivers)
- Veterinarians and support staff
- Waste management workers
- Public and private security and emergency preparedness workers

Individuals who meet Tier 2 criteria are required to bring proof of employment such as an identification badge, pay stub, or letter from current employer that documents inclusion in one of the above categories. **Providers do not need to verify the validity of the document.** This documentation is only required for the first dose, not the second dose (for those vaccines requiring two doses).

As a reminder, individuals in the following categories remain eligible for the vaccine:

- People ages 65 or older
- High-risk medical conditions (ages 18 and up, or ages 16 and up for Pfizer vaccine only). To receive the vaccine, people with these underlying medical conditions should complete the Louisiana COVID-19 Vaccine Attestation Form before their appointment:
  - Asthma (moderate to severe)
  - Cancer
  - Cerebrovascular disease (affects blood vessels and blood supply to the brain)
  - Chronic kidney disease
  - Chronic liver disease
  - COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
  - Current or former smoker
  - Cystic fibrosis
  - Down syndrome
  - Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease or cardiomyopathies
  - Hypertension or high blood pressure
  - Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
  - Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines
  - Overweight (body mass index [BMI] of 25 or higher but less than 30)
  - Obesity (BMI of 30 or higher but less than 40)
  - Severe obesity (BMI of 40 or higher)
  - Pregnancy
  - Pulmonary fibrosis (having damaged or scarred lung tissues)
  - Severe neurologic conditions, such as dementia
  - Sickle cell disease
  - Thalassemia (a type of blood disorder)
  - Type 1 diabetes mellitus
  - Type 2 diabetes mellitus

Eligibility by workforce category:

- Ambulatory and outpatient providers and staff
  - Behavioral health providers and staff
  - Community care providers and staff
  - Dental providers and staff
  - Dialysis providers and staff
  - Non-emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) providers and staff
  - Urgent care clinic providers and staff
- Professional home care providers (including hospice workers) and home care recipients (including older and younger people with disabilities over the age of 16 who receive community or home-based care, as well as clients of home health agencies)
- Unpaid family caregivers to people who are receiving licensed home and community-based services

- American Sign Language (ASL) and foreign language interpreters and Support Service Providers (SSPs) working in community and clinic-based settings, and clients who are both deaf and blind
- Health-related support personnel (lab staff, mortuary staff who have contact with corpses, pharmacy staff)
- Schools of allied health students, residents, and staff
- Law enforcement and other first responders
- Louisiana Unified Command Group
- State legislators
- State and local essential COVID emergency response personnel
- Some elections staff ahead of March and April elections
- Teachers and any other support staff working on site in K-12 or daycare
- Any staff working in congregate facilities (prisons/jails, shelters, dorms, rehab/detox centers, group homes)

All providers of COVID-19 Vaccines must follow the priority group guidance listed on the LDH COVID-19 Vaccination page, and NOT determine their own criteria for vaccine eligibility.

### Questions and Support:

For questions, please contact [LAProvider@AETNA.com](mailto:LAProvider@AETNA.com) or call 1-855-242-0802 and follow the prompts.