



DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
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WASHINGTON, DC 20301-1010

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MEMORANDUM FOR SENIOR PENTAGON LEADERSHIP (SEE DISTRIBUTION)
COMMANDERS OF THE COMBATANT COMMANDS
DEFENSE AGENCY AND DOD FIELD ACTIVITY DIRECTORS

SUBJECT: **Coronavirus Disease 2019 Vaccine Guidance**

- References:
- (a) Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 6200.02, "Application of Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Rules to Department of Defense Force Health Protection Programs," February 27, 2008
 - (b) DoDI 6205.02, "DoD Immunization Program," July 23, 2019
 - (c) Executive Secretary Memorandum, "Response to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Request for Department of Defense Coronavirus Disease 2019 Vaccine Requirement and Plan," October 15, 2020
 - (d) DoDI 6055.01, "DoD Safety and Occupational Health (SOH) Program," October 14, 2014
 - (e) Title 5, U.S. Code, section 7901
 - (f) DoDI 6025.23, "Health Care Eligibility Under the Secretarial Designee (SECDES) Program and Related Special Authorities," September 16, 2011

This memorandum provides **guidance on the provision of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) vaccines**. The Defense Health Agency (DHA) is the lead coordinating DoD Component for executing this guidance, in coordination with the Military Departments and other DoD Components.

The Department continues to work closely with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines. **It is expected that COVID-19 vaccines will initially receive an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)**. Although the details for administering each COVID-19 vaccine depend on the terms, conditions, and requirements of the specific EUA, **it is expected that COVID-19 vaccination will be voluntary until any vaccine receives full FDA approval and licensure**. The Department will distribute and administer any COVID-19 vaccine in accordance with reference (a) and applicable law. DoD Components will comply with applicable labor obligations (to the extent such obligations do not conflict with the Department's ability to conduct operations during this public health emergency), as appropriate.

COVID-19 vaccines are expected to increase our force health protection posture.

Therefore, in accordance with references (b) and (e), and subject to any guidance issued by the President, I authorize the Department to provide vaccines to Service members and other eligible DoD health care beneficiaries, as well as selected other-than-U.S. forces (OTUSF) populations, such as DoD civilian employees and specified contractor employees as described below. **The Department will focus initial COVID-19 vaccination efforts on health care workers, emergency**



services personnel, personnel performing activities associated with critical national capabilities, select deploying individuals, other critical and essential support personnel, and high-risk individuals prior to vaccinating other healthy individuals. I direct the DHA, in coordination with the Military Departments and other interested DoD Components, to refine specific vaccination requirements for these populations as part of vaccine implementation planning, consistent with the below guidance. DoD recommends vaccination of all DoD-affiliated individuals, as appropriate. HHS and CDC intend to make COVID-19 vaccines widely available within the United States, including at retail pharmacies. These efforts are expected to cover a substantial proportion of DoD-affiliated individuals.

Individuals eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccines administered by DoD are as follows:

1. Service members on active duty and in the Selected Reserve (including National Guard personnel) are eligible and encouraged to receive COVID-19 vaccines at military medical treatment facilities (MTFs) or other DoD vaccination sites, as identified by the Military Departments. Service members who are not able to access a DoD vaccination site and elect to receive the COVID-19 vaccine through non-DoD channels must provide documentation of receipt of the vaccination to their unit for documentation in appropriate medical readiness systems.
2. Dependents of active duty Service members, retirees, and other eligible DoD beneficiaries are eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccinations and encouraged to access COVID-19 vaccines through existing processes at MTFs or through the private sector care component of TRICARE.
3. Subject to direction by the Military Departments, other DoD Components, or Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Components concerned, and in accordance with reference (c), DoD civilian employees, who are not otherwise eligible DoD beneficiaries, are eligible to receive the vaccine, and select contractor personnel who usually receive influenza vaccines as part of a DoD occupational safety and health program (e.g., health care workers, maintenance depot workers), and who are not otherwise eligible DoD beneficiaries, may be offered COVID-19 vaccines at DoD vaccination sites. Follow-on care (other than the administration of a second vaccine dose) will be provided through such individuals' existing health care plans or personal health care providers. The Military Departments or DoD or OSD Components may request, through the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, that COVID-19 immunizations be offered to additional DoD contractor employees that provide mission-essential critical capabilities.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, and Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs are delegated the authority to approve COVID-19 immunizations for OTUSF personnel not otherwise covered by the above guidance on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with references (b), (d), (e), and (f).

To the extent possible, individuals are encouraged to return to the same location for their second COVID-19 vaccine dose, as applicable, in accordance with the vaccine's EUA.

Reporting procedures for all personnel receiving COVID-19 vaccines from DoD must comply with applicable CDC and DoD guidance, including that from the Military Department concerned, as well as MTF or DoD vaccination site requirements and all applicable laws.

The DHA, as lead DoD Component, will provide further information through the COVID-19 Vaccine Operational Planning Team and other mechanisms. My point of contact for this guidance is Dr. David J. Smith, who may be reached at (703) 681-8456 or david.j.smith152.civ@mail.mil.



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