

**FORWARDED ON BEHALF OF
THE PANDEMIC WORKING GROUP**

To: All VPD Employees - Civilian and Sworn
COVID-19 Update: May 13th, 2021

The following will provide an update on key developments and reminders for the week of May 13th, 2021 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As the Vancouver Police Department's response remains fluid and adaptive, it is important that all VPD staff continue to follow the developing situation on a daily basis.

KEY UPDATES

- COVID-19 Vaccine Invitation – VCH Vaccination Campaign for Essential Frontline Workers
- COVID-19 Vaccination – 2nd Dose Registration **Reminder**
- One VPD Employee Tests Positive for COVID-19

COVID-19 VACCINE INVITATION – VCH Vaccination Campaign for Essential Frontline Workers

If you have not received your first COVID-19 vaccine dose, please see the attached PDF documents (letter and FAQ) that outlines the instructions to get your vaccine through the Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) Vaccination Campaign for Essential Frontline Workers. Once registered, you will be given instructions on how to book your appointment. These appointments will be available on a first come-first served basis.

Please carefully read all of the attached documentation from Vancouver Coastal Health that is included with this e-mail. This invitation from VCH is for VPD employees only.

COVID-19 VACCINATION – 2nd Dose Registration **REMINDER**

All VPD employees are reminded that in order to obtain your second COVID-19 vaccine dose, if you have not already done so, you are required to register with the provincial vaccination program.

All employees can register using this link provided:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/register>

[If accessing on VPD computers, use Google Chrome or Microsoft Edge, not Internet Explorer]

Once registered, employees will be notified at a later date when they can book their second dose appointment. Your first dose will be logged in the system via your Personal Health Number to ensure that you are notified for your second dose during the appropriate time.

ONE VPD EMPLOYEE TESTS POSTIVE FOR COVID-19

Since Thursday May 6th, one VPD employee associated to Graveley has tested positive for COVID-19. The employee is following medical advice and is self-isolating as per protocol. Human Resources and the Pandemic Working Group have taken all necessary steps to ensure the exposure is contained. Any employee who is required to self-isolate will be contacted by the Public Health Authority or Human Resources.

All employees are reminded to adhere to the VPD Operational Safety Guidelines, Mask Protocol, and to respect the occupancy capacity limits set for rooms and elevators for everyone's safety.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

CISM/Peer Support

Members are reminded that if they require support during the COVID-19 crisis they can contact CISM/Peer Support and *Vancouver Beyond the Blue*. Information on these services and other supports and can be found on the COVID-19 intranet website and on VPDemerg.ca.

Accessing Key COVID-19 Information

From your desk:	VPD's COVID-19 Information & Updates webpage via the Intranet http://references.sharepoint01.vpd.bc.ca/COVID19/default.aspx
From your email:	Weekly Situation Reports distributed to your VPD email address
From home or cell:	Go to VPDemerg.ca . Password: Nitro



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COVID-19 Vaccine Update

First dose vaccine available for first responders in the VCH region

Date: May 3, 2021

To: First responders (police) working in Vancouver, Richmond, and on the North Shore

From: VCH COVID-19 Vaccine Campaign Integrated Operating Committee

Cc: Dr. Patricia Daly, Vice-President, Public Health & Chief Medical Health Officer

Vancouver Coastal Health continues to implement the provincial COVID-19 Immunization Plan, which includes frontline and essential workers in sectors where full use of personal protective equipment and barriers can be challenging, where outbreaks and clusters have occurred, and where workers live or work in congregate settings. Eligibility has now expanded to include **first responders aged 18 and older** working in Vancouver, Richmond, and on the North Shore.

This week, you may follow the two-step process below to register and then book an appointment.

Eligibility: This invitation is for uniformed officers or those who have similar interaction with the public. Staff who do not interact with the public directly are not eligible at this time.

HOW TO BOOK YOUR APPOINTMENT

If you experience difficulty booking, please call 1-833-838-2323 (open 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.) for assistance.

STEP 1: Register

- To register, go to: <https://www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca/s/?variant=frontline>
- On the registration page, enter your personal and contact information and the following access code: **30003254246**.
 - Please note: **you will not be able to register without the access code.**
- Upon successful registration, you will receive a confirmation number followed by a text or e-mail within 24 hours with a unique link for booking your vaccination.

STEP 2: Book

- Use the link provided in your text or e-mail to visit the online booking page.
- In the online booking process, **select from a list** of all the priority clinics available.
- Book your appointment.

This registration site is intended only for identified frontline workers. By choosing to register through this service, you are acknowledging that you have received this code from your employer.

This letter is not transferrable. Vaccine doses have been allocated for your staff only; do not share the link with others as they will be turned away at the clinic.

COVID-19 Vaccine Update

To ensure eligibility, please bring with you:

- your driver's license (or other government issued photo ID)
- Personal Health Number/BC Services Card, if you have one
- Employee ID or badge, paystub, or letter from your employer

Second doses will be offered 16 weeks from the first dose based on provincial and national recommendations. Data from jurisdictions around the world shows one dose of vaccine provides a high level of protection. When it's time to receive the second dose, your staff will be invited to receive it as they were for their first dose. It is important they retain the paper record of immunization to bring back to the clinic when it time for their second dose.

A list of FAQs is attached. If you have further questions, or want to know more about COVID-19 vaccination in VCH, please visit [VCH.ca](https://vch.ca).

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW BEFORE ATTENDING THE CLINIC:

- mRNA vaccine will be available at this clinic: either Pfizer or Moderna. A choice will not be offered.
- This vaccine is recommended for those aged 18 and older.
- Please do not attend the clinic if you are feeling unwell, experiencing COVID-like symptoms, or if you have been asked by Public Health to self-isolate.
- Come alone, to assist with COVID-19 safety protocols. Physical distancing measures will be in place throughout, including while waiting in line.
- You will be provided with a medical mask and reminded to maintain physical distancing guidelines while at the clinic.
- After you receive your vaccination, please plan to stay on site for 15 minutes to ensure you experience no adverse effects, such as an allergic reaction.

Important reminder: Provincial orders and guidelines remain in place for everyone, even if you have received the vaccine.

COVID-19 Vaccine FAQ

Who is being served at this clinic?

Under B.C.'s COVID-19 Immunization Plan, vaccine will be provided for frontline and essential workers, especially in industries where full use of personal protective equipment and barriers can be challenging, where outbreaks and clusters have occurred or are ongoing, and where workers live or work in congregate settings.

Which vaccine will I be receiving?

At this time, frontline and essential workers will receive one of the vaccines approved for all adults 18 and over: Pfizer or Moderna. We encourage you to accept the vaccine you are offered, as all of vaccines available for use in Canada are safe, effective, and will save lives.

How will I know when it is my turn to get the vaccine?

Vaccine is being administered through a phased approach developed by the Ministry of Health, starting with priority groups first. Sequencing of these groups is based on recommendations from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) and on our own epidemiological data to reduce the risk of infection to those most vulnerable to severe disease and death following COVID-19 infection, and to protect our health care system. For more information on the provincial immunization plan and priority groups, visit the [BC government website](#). For frontline and essential workers, a appointment information will be communicated clearly and directly to each sector and employer.

Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?

Immunization has saved more lives in Canada in the last 50 years than any other health measure. Canada has a very thorough system to approve new vaccines for human use. Only vaccines that have been shown to be safe are approved. Once approved for use, all vaccines are closely monitored by public health officials and Health Canada for their safety. The COVID-19 vaccines currently used in Canada have been administered to millions of people around the world and have been shown to be both safe and effective.

How do the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines work?

The vaccine enables our body to produce protection (such as antibodies) against the COVID-19 virus. This immune response protects us from getting infected if the real virus enters our bodies. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines use a new method (messenger RNA – mRNA, the genetic code for a capsule protein of the virus) to help our bodies make this protection.

Can I get COVID-19 from the vaccine?

You cannot get COVID-19 from the vaccine. However, if you were exposed to the virus before you received your vaccine, you may be incubating the virus and not realize you have COVID-19 until after you are vaccinated. It takes two to three weeks to gain protection from the COVID-19 vaccine. This means if you contracted the virus before getting the vaccine, or within the two-week period following vaccination, you may still get sick from COVID-19. If you experience symptoms of COVID-19 after you've been vaccinated, use [B.C. self-assessment tool](#) to determine if you need to be tested.

Are there side effects of the COVID-19 vaccine?

Serious side effects due to the vaccines were not seen in the clinical trials. The people who received the

COVID-19 Vaccine FAQ

vaccines in the clinical trials continue to be monitored for any longer-term side effects. A number of processes are in place in Canada to monitor the safety of the vaccines as more people get immunized.

Common reactions to the vaccines may include soreness, redness, swelling and itchiness where the vaccine was given. For some people, these reactions may show up eight or more days after getting the vaccine. Other reactions may include tiredness, headache, fever, chills, muscle or joint soreness, swollen lymph nodes under the armpit, nausea and vomiting. These reactions are mild and generally last one to two days. If you have concerns about any symptoms you develop after receiving the vaccine, speak with your health-care provider or call 8-1-1 for advice.

It is important to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting any vaccine because about 1 in a million people can have a life-threatening allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. This may include hives, difficulty breathing, or swelling of the throat, tongue or lips. Should this reaction occur, the health-care providers on site are prepared to treat it. If symptoms develop after you leave the clinic, call 9-1-1 or your local emergency number. Always report serious or unexpected reactions to your health-care provider.

What is the rate of side effects, and should we consider scheduling changes to accommodate a percentage of people who will need time off to recover?

Most people experience mild side effects, such as a sore arm, that would not typically interrupt work. We have vaccinated all the staff at a variety of workplaces and have not seen a situation where a large percentage needed time off to recover from vaccination.

Who should not get the vaccine?

You should not get the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine if you have a serious allergy (anaphylaxis) to:

- Those who have a serious allergy to polyethylene glycol (PEG)
- A previous dose of a COVID-19 vaccine or to any part of the vaccine

Tell your health-care provider if you have had anaphylaxis but no cause was found after seeing an allergy specialist, or if you had anaphylaxis before and did not get seen by an allergy specialist.

Are there additional considerations to getting the vaccine?

Speak with your health care provider if you:

- Have an immune system weakened by disease or medical treatment;
- Have an autoimmune condition;
- Are pregnant, may be pregnant or are planning to become pregnant;
- Are breastfeeding;
- Have received a monoclonal antibody or convalescent plasma for treatment or prevention of COVID-19;
- Have received a vaccine in the last 14 days; or
- Have symptoms of COVID-19.

I already had COVID-19. Do I still need the shot?

If you had, or may have had, COVID-19 you should still get the vaccine. This is because you may not be immune to the virus that causes COVID-19 and could get infected and sick again.

COVID-19 Vaccine FAQ

How are the vaccines given?

The vaccines are given by injection as a series of two doses. It is important to get both doses of the vaccine for full protection. Second doses will be offered 16 weeks from the first dose based on provincial and national [recommendations](#). Data from jurisdictions around the world shows one dose of vaccine provides a high level of protection. When it's time to receive your second dose, you will be invited to receive it as you were for your first. Please retain your paper record of immunization to bring back to the clinic with you at that time.

What if I choose not to get vaccinated?

Getting the vaccine is not mandatory, and whether you choose to get the vaccine will not affect your access to health care services, nor employment or housing status. However, we encourage everyone who can do so to get the vaccine, as it will help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and save lives by preventing disease, especially for people most likely to have severe illness or die. If enough people get vaccinated, it makes it difficult for the disease to spread. We hope that as more Canadians get vaccinated, we can return to activities that haven't been possible during the pandemic.

As an employer, am I able to get a list of my employees who attended a vaccination clinic?

Patient privacy is protected under the provincial Health Act, so we are not able to share a list of who attended each clinic.

Do I need to continue wearing a mask and follow social distancing measures after I receive my vaccine?

Yes, public health orders, restrictions and guidelines remain in place for everyone, regardless if you have received the vaccine. Provincial guidelines on what those who have been vaccinated can and cannot do are current in development. At this time, it will still be important to wash your hands, adhere to physical distancing guidelines, wear a mask, and stay home when sick, even after receiving the vaccine.

Data is still being gathered around the world about how long the protection lasts from COVID-19 vaccines or how well they work in preventing asymptomatic infection or reducing transmission of the virus. This means that all current enhanced safety measures and COVID-19 protocols will stay in place until a significant percentage of the population has been vaccinated for COVID-19 or until it is deemed safe to relax those rules.

Can I travel once I received the vaccine?

Federal and provincial health orders and guidelines remain in place for everyone, even if you have received the vaccine. Learn more about [province-wide](#) and [federal restrictions](#).

If I am eligible to be vaccinated but I am not a resident of B.C., can I still be vaccinated?

Yes, everyone living in B.C. will have the opportunity to be immunized, as long as the vaccine is recommended for them. That means that groups such as temporary foreign workers, international students, people who are not permanent residents of Canada, and people who recently moved to B.C. will be able to get the COVID-19 vaccine.