

# How to get a COVID-19 vaccine in Seattle, King County and Washington state

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Dr. John Corman signals for more Pfizer vaccine as Amazon partners with Virginia Mason at a pop-up COVID-19 vaccine clinic in Amazon's Seventh ... (Ken Lambert / The Seattle Times)

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By [Alex Iniguez](#) 🐦

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**Editor's note:** *Guidance and information can change rapidly, and many of the resources listed below have recently experienced failures, backups or inaccuracies. If you notice a discrepancy or have any other information or tips, please email [newstips@seattletimes.com](mailto:newstips@seattletimes.com).*

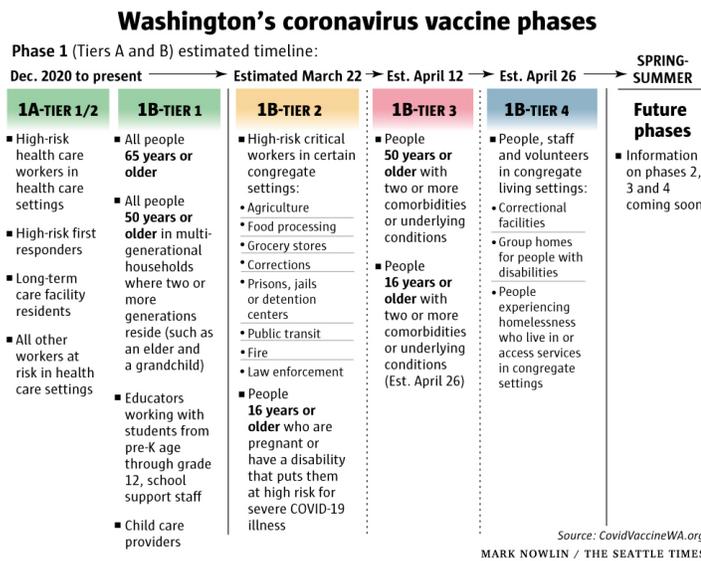
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In late January, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee announced a public-private partnership [intended to speed up coronavirus vaccine distribution with a goal of administering 45,000 vaccines a day](#).

At the same time, Inslee acknowledged the state is implementing its strategy before it has enough vaccine to keep up with that pace.

The state is in vaccination Tier 1 of Phase 1B, which allows people 65 and older — and those 50 and older in [multigenerational households](#) — to receive the vaccine. That's in addition to people in Phase 1A, including health care workers, high-risk first responders and long-term care residents.

At the beginning of March, Inslee [expanded this tier](#) to include teachers, child care workers and school support staff.



Previously, Tier 1 of Phase 1B was to include [people 70 and older](#), but it was expanded in January after the federal government called on states for the change. About 80% of Washington state's COVID-19 deaths are among those 65 and older, Inslee said.

The changing federal guidance, combined with a predictable deluge of interest, has made it difficult for the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) to inform the public about the vaccine. DOH has experienced issues with its PhaseFinder application that allows users to find out if they're eligible to be vaccinated, as well as its main website.

The result so far has been confusion and seemingly endless searches for information from people eager to get their loved ones, or themselves, vaccinated.

In recent days, however, the state reached its goal of vaccinated more than 45,000 people a day on average while surpassing more than 2 million doses administered. Nearly 10% of Washington's population is fully vaccinated.

We will continue to update this page with guidance on how to receive a coronavirus vaccine in the Seattle area.

Here's a step-by-step guide on how to get a vaccine in Seattle, King County and Washington state:

## Before you start: Be patient

Before you begin your vaccination process, the top thing to know is that you'll need plenty of patience.

The vaccine rollout has encountered all sorts of snags and slowdowns, and even if with clear messaging, the supply of vaccines wouldn't be enough to cover everyone.

Hospital leaders say they've [received an overwhelming flood of phone calls and hospital visits from people seeking vaccine appointments](#).

Insee said the state is shifting its strategy to create the infrastructure for mass vaccination without waiting for the volume of doses to match.

"We want people to recognize this is going to take time," the governor said.

So, yes, you'll need to pack your patience to get an appointment, and sometimes even to get information from the state, a vaccination site or your doctor.

If you're ready to deal with some possibly frustrating scenarios, keep reading.

### **Step 1: Are you eligible?**

The first task is to find out if you're eligible for a vaccine.

If you have an internet connection, you can use the state's PhaseFinder tool at [findyourphaseswa.org](http://findyourphaseswa.org) to find out. If you're not eligible, you can enter your information to be alerted when it's your turn to be vaccinated.

PhaseFinder has experienced failures due to the influx of interest, so it may not be accessible at all times.

[The Seattle Times has an updating, visual guide to whether you're eligible](#).

If you don't have an internet connection, or if PhaseFinder is down, you can call DOH at 1-800-525-0127, press #. That number has seen long response times and a logjam of people trying to get information, so you may not be able to get through.

If you can't get through calling the main number above, DOH suggests calling its alternate phone number as it tries to add more call capacity: [888-856-5816](tel:888-856-5816).

If you cannot find whether you're eligible to be vaccinated, contact your primary care provider, who can advise your next steps.

## **Step 2: Find a vaccination site**

Once you've determined you're eligible to be vaccinated, you can find a vaccination site on [DOH's website](#). You can see the map here, too, via DOH:

It's worth noting, however, that DOH said the site is a "work in progress" and may not be kept 100% up to date on which sites have vaccines available. But it's a place to start.

If you know you're eligible to receive the vaccine and aren't having success finding a vaccination site through DOH's website, or if you don't have internet access, try calling DOH at 1-800-525-0127, press #, or at its alternate phone number of 888-856-5816.

Another reminder: DOH has seen long response times and a logjam of people trying to get information, so you may not be able to get through.

You also can and should check your local health district's website. In King County, that's [Public Health – Seattle & King County](#).

The city of Seattle [is opening a mass vaccination site at Lumen Field Event Center](#) (formally CenturyLink) on March 13. You can get notified of appointments by [signing up here](#). Eventually, when supply allows, the city intends to vaccinate 22,000 people a day, seven days a week.

If you cannot find a vaccination site with open appointments, but you know you're eligible to be vaccinated, contact your primary care provider for guidance.

## **Step 3: Make an appointment, get on a wait list or get in line**

Once you find an open vaccination site near you, you'll need to make an appointment, if available.

Some sites are first come, first served, so be sure to know whether you need an appointment at your preferred vaccination site. If it's a first-come-first-served site, get there early and be prepared to wait.

If your vaccination site takes appointments, make one and hope that it doesn't get canceled. Some vaccination sites [have canceled appointments](#) because they said they don't have the supply of vaccines to fill all the appointments.

On Feb. 26, Seattle announced [the creation of a standby list for certain residents 65 and older](#). The list — meant for those in ZIP codes most disproportionately impacted by the pandemic — allows people to be notified in the event the Seattle Fire Department’s Mobile Vaccination Teams have doses left over after a daily COVID-19 vaccination event. [Eligible residents can add their name to the list here](#).

To get on a wait list at MultiCare, call its automated line at [833-770-0530](tel:833-770-0530). To get on Virginia Mason’s wait list, [click this link](#) and fill out the form.

To make a vaccine appointment at Safeway or Albertsons, [click here](#), QFC’s appointment site can be found [here](#), and Costco’s appointment site can be found [here](#), though availability may be spotty at these sites [as doses make their way to pharmacies](#).

At King County’s [two mass-vaccination sites](#), in Kent and Auburn, you must make an appointment. [Click here to access King County’s scheduling tool](#). However, you may not be able to get an appointment. Public Health — Seattle & King County has said no appointments are available at the two mass-vaccination sites, but appointments have occasionally become available [at this link for the site in Auburn](#) and [at this link for the site in Kent](#).

[Seattle Children’s hospital’s scheduling tool can be found here](#), though appointments may not be available.

If you’re having trouble making an appointment in King County, call Public Health — Seattle & King County at [206-477-3977](tel:206-477-3977) from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, or email at [covidvaccine@kingcounty.gov](mailto:covidvaccine@kingcounty.gov).

[A team of four guerrilla techies](#) have launched the state’s first one-stop site to find available vaccine appointments — [covidwa.com](https://covidwa.com) — but another warning: The site offers no solace from the vaccine system’s main problem, which is a lack of doses.

If you still need help, you can request access to the closed Facebook group called “[Find a COVID shot WA](#),” where neighbors are volunteering assistance.

#### **Step 4: Get vaccinated and continue to wear a mask**

After you get your first shot, you’ll need to wait either three or four weeks before getting a second shot, depending which vaccine you received.

The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine requires a booster three weeks after the first shot, and Moderna has a four-week gap between the two shots.

This means that the 95% protection generated by the two vaccines won't fully kick in until five or six weeks after the first shot.

The newly authorized Johnson & Johnson vaccine requires one dose and provided [significant protection](#) against illness four weeks after administration in clinical trials, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Some vaccines, like for the flu, can prevent people from getting sick but not necessarily from being infected and able to transmit the virus to others. It isn't known if that is the case with coronavirus vaccines, said Dr. Tom Frieden, a former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [to Kaiser Health News](#).

"We don't yet know if the vaccine protects against infection, or only against illness," Frieden said. "In other words, a vaccinated person might still be able to spread the virus, even if they don't feel sick."

It is prudent for the vaccinated to still wear masks because clinical trials didn't answer the question about a vaccinated person [still being able to spread the disease](#), said Michele Roberts, a DOH acting assistant secretary.

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## How is the pandemic affecting you?

What has changed about your daily life? What kinds of discussions are you having with family members and friends? Are you a health care worker who's on the front lines of the response? Are you a COVID-19 patient or do you know one? Whoever you are, we want to hear from you so our news coverage is as complete, accurate and useful as possible. [If you're using a mobile device and can't see the form on this page, click here.](#)



The Seattle Times

*How is the COVID-19 pandemic affecting you? What changes have you noticed in your life or habits? What kinds of discussions are you having about it?*

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## Your contact info

We'll be in touch if we need more information.

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*Information from Seattle Times archives is included in this report.*

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