

COVID-19 Vaccine FAQ's for Domestic Employers



Q: Should I encourage the worker in my home to get the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: Health professionals agree that the fastest way to ending the COVID-19 pandemic is widespread vaccination. As an employer, you should open up a line of communication about the vaccine, offer yourself as a resource, but you **should not** make getting a vaccine a condition of employment, or push your employee to get vaccinated if they don't want to.

Here is some information to share with the worker in your home:

- The vaccine has been shown to be highly effective at preventing someone from getting sick with COVID-19.
- The vaccine is free of charge, and available to everyone regardless of immigration status.
- The effectiveness and safety of vaccines has been carefully evaluated by the government. You can learn more about how the Centers for Disease Control has determined how vaccines work [here in English](#) and [here in Spanish](#).
- Getting vaccinated will protect not just you, but also the people close to you.
- Although health professionals are not entirely sure how long the immunity lasts, it significantly lowers your risk of getting sick with COVID-19 by creating antibodies in your system.
- The combination of getting vaccinated and following precautions, like wearing a mask and social distancing, offer the best protection against COVID-19 and controlling its spread.

Q: How can I support the worker in my home to get the COVID-19 vaccine?

A: There are concrete things that you can do as an employer to support the person who works in your home to get the vaccine. Hand in Hand recommends the following:

- Have an open conversation about the vaccine so you can understand any questions, concerns or hesitations the worker may have.
- Offer to help navigate your state's evolving vaccine rollout plan, sign up procedures, and to find a vaccination site location.
- Provide paid time off to get the vaccine.
- Offer to pay for transportation to and from the vaccination site, such as a car service or taxi.
- Offer to help pay for childcare if they need it to get vaccinated.
- Provide at least 2 paid days off after the employee receives the vaccine. Many people who get the vaccine are reporting discomfort such as headaches, fever and significant pain.

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Q: Does the nanny in my home qualify to get the vaccine at the same time as other childcare providers?

A: The CDC distinguishes between group/daycare childcare settings and in-home childcare. The CDC recommends [that workers in private households fall into the essential worker category](#) and receive the vaccination in Phase 1C. However, it is unclear how the CDC recommendations are being adopted by states. If the nanny in your home wants to get vaccinated, we suggest that you provide a letter they can use to prove that they are an essential childcare worker and are eligible to receive the vaccine. For more information check with your state's vaccine rollout plan.

Q: When will home attendants be eligible to get the vaccine?

A: This varies by state. In some states, like New York State and California, home health care and In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) workers who provide support for seniors and people with disabilities are top priority for the vaccine. Please check your state's vaccine rollout plan for this answer.

Q: When will house cleaners be eligible to get the vaccine?

A: The CDC recommends [that workers in private households fall into the essential worker category](#) and receive the vaccination in Phase 1C. As house cleaners are employed in private households, they are included in this recommendation. However, it is unclear how the CDC recommendations are being adopted by states. For questions about eligibility, please check with your state's vaccine rollout plan.

Q: What if the domestic worker in my home does not want to get vaccinated?

A: Getting vaccinated is a personal choice, and under no circumstances should you attempt to force the worker in your home to get the vaccine or make it a condition of employment. As with any difficult subject, good communication is essential. Start an open conversation so you can understand the worker's reluctance, show that you are a trusted resource, and that you value and respect them.

Furthermore, as an employer, please keep in mind that there has been inconsistent messaging in the media about the pandemic and vaccines, that has generated broad public mistrust towards vaccination. Additionally, there is an ugly history of using Black and brown bodies for medical experimentation that has led many to reject vaccination. [The Tuskegee experiment](#) is an infamous example. For many people of color, their mistrust of the medical establishment is rooted in experiences of discrimination, exclusion and abuse.

Q: What sort of plan should I make with the worker in my home after they receive the vaccine?

A: Once the worker in your home receives the vaccine, it's important to continue to maintain open communication. It is still important to continue with safety protocols such as wearing masks, washing hands, social distancing and avoiding social gatherings. While the vaccine has been proven to prevent the person who received the vaccine from falling sick with COVID-19, it is unclear how effective it is at stopping transmission.

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