



Australian Government

## COVID-19 VACCINATION

# Disability Provider Alert

19 March 2021

## Priority groups for COVID-19 Phase 1b confirmed

### Important points

- COVID-19 vaccination is free for everyone and voluntary.
- The Department of Health will contact people eligible for phase 1a for their vaccine appointment.
- This provider alert outlines who is in Phase 1b and how to make a booking.
- We encourage people to be patient if they are not able to get a vaccination appointment right away to check again as more GP clinics come online over the coming weeks.

### Phase 1b commences on 22 March 2021

The following people are eligible to receive a vaccine in this Phase:

- Healthcare workers currently employed and not included in Phase 1a
- Critical and high risk workers currently employed
- People 70 years and over
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people 55 years and over
- People 18 years and over with an underlying medical condition, including disability

## Eligible people with disability

People with disability 18 years and over with an underlying medical condition are eligible for Phase 1b. The Department of Health have developed a presentation about priority groups for [COVID-19 Vaccination Program: Phase 1b](#), which includes a list of underlying medical conditions.

This includes people with disability who require frequent assistance with activities of daily living as well as people living with Down Syndrome, muscular dystrophy, traumatic brain and spinal cord injury, or severe intellectual disability.

People with disability attending centre-based services (e.g. day programs, respite care, supported employment) are also eligible to receive a vaccine in Phase 1b.

### Proof of eligibility

People with disability can rely on their GP clinic's records as evidence when receiving the vaccination.

For people with disability attending a vaccination site other than their regular GP clinic, they can rely on medical records as evidence such as:

- MyHealth Record
- Clinical records from a GP
- A referral from GP or treating specialist
- A printout of your medical history as recorded in your clinical records;
- A printout of your chronic disease care plan; a discharge summary from a hospital or other medical facility; or
- A valid script or medication prescribed to treat one or more of the relevant medical conditions

Where none of these are available, individuals may complete an [Eligibility Declaration Form](#).

## Eligible Disability Workers

Disability workers fall within the categories:

- Healthcare workers currently employed and not included in Phase 1a.
- All workers providing in-home and community care, including centre-based care.
- Workers who regularly engage face to face with a person with disability who is eligible under Phase 1a and Phase 1b including those conducting regulatory activities and advocacy services.

This means that all disability workers who are not eligible in Phase 1a are eligible to receive a vaccine in Phase 1b. This includes any worker providing home or community care at a centre-based setting such as day programs and supported employment.

You **do not** need to be a full time worker or a permanent employee of a disability provider to qualify. Any worker who provides direct support to people with disability eligible for Phase 1a and Phase 1b are eligible to receive a vaccine in Phase 1b. This includes:

- Independent contractors, labour hire workers or casual employees.
- On-site administrative staff, cleaners, kitchen staff, students on placement and other ancillary staff who work within disability settings.

## Proof of eligibility

Proof of occupation (ID card, letter from employer or [Eligibility Declaration Form](#)) will be required to demonstrate eligibility.

A letter from an employer on a letterhead that states the person is an employee of the organisation and provides support to people with disability is sufficient. This can be for full-time, part-time, casual or independent contractors that a disability provider may engage to provide services and support.

For example:

*ABC Disability Provider Letterhead*

*Ms Jones is employed/contracted by ABC Disability Provider to deliver direct supports to people with disability.*

*Regards*

*ABC Disability Provider*

## Eligible Carers

Carers (paid and unpaid) are eligible to receive a vaccine in Phase 1b if they are a carer of:

- a resident of an aged care facility or residential disability accommodation who is eligible under phase 1a
- a person 70 years and over who is eligible under phase 1b
- a person with a specified underlying medical condition who is eligible under phase 1b
- a child with a specified underlying medical condition who would be eligible under Phase 1b if they were 18 or older

Family members of people with disability who are **not** carers are not eligible in Phase 1b.

## Proof of eligibility

Carers documentation (such as proof of a carer payment or [Eligibility Declaration Form](#)) will be required to demonstrate eligibility.

## Eligible volunteers

Disability support volunteers who provide support to people in their homes, respite care, educational, employment, leisure settings and/or residential settings, including those providing transport and advocacy services are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine in Phase 1b.

## Proof of eligibility

Volunteer documentation (such as letter from employer/ centre-based support provider or [Eligibility Declaration Form](#)) will be required to demonstrate eligibility.

## Where to get vaccinated

People eligible for Phase 1b will be able to access vaccinations at:

- GP respiratory clinics
- general practices that meet specific requirements
- Aboriginal Controlled Community Health Services, and
- state-run vaccination clinics

You may also be able to be vaccinated at your regular GP practice if they have signed up to deliver vaccinations.

Most individuals in Phase 1b will make an appointment through the COVID Vaccine Information and Location Service or the provider's own booking system and attend a vaccination site to be vaccinated.

All locations offering COVID-19 vaccination should be accessible, including physical access and communication.

## How to book a vaccination in Phase 1b

Vaccination bookings can be made by using the [COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Checker](#) on the Department of Health website.

The Vaccine Eligibility Checker helps you determine which phase of the vaccine roll-out you fall in. If you are eligible for Phase 1b, you will be able to view and select clinic locations based on the postcode you enter.

Appointments can also be booked directly at a participating general practice or Commonwealth operated GP- led Respiratory clinic, by contacting them directly.

More vaccination clinics, participating General Practices, and state and territory vaccination clinics will become available in the coming weeks so if there are no clinics or appointments available in required areas check back at a later time over the coming weeks.

More information on booking vaccination appointments can also be provided by the National Coronavirus and COVID-19 Vaccination Helpline on 1800 020 080.

### Vaccine eligibility checker

For more information, please see the [COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility Checker](#). The Checker includes a list of what is included as an 'underlying medical condition'.

People with disability are also encouraged to consult with their GP if additional confirmation and evidence of their underlying medical condition is required.

### Locations where COVID-19 vaccination Phase 1b will be delivered

[A new fact sheet has been released](#) that lists the general practices, Aboriginal Controlled Community Health Services, and GP-led respiratory clinics where COVID-19 vaccinations will be available to people in phase 1b of the roll-out commencing on 22 March 2021.

## More information

### COVID-19 vaccination disability service provider website

A designated webpage is available for disability service providers. The page includes information and resources to help providers plan for the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out. [A separate information page](#) is available as a resource for people with disability.

### COVID-19 vaccination disability service providers toolkit

The COVID-19 vaccine disability service provider readiness toolkit is a collection of resources designed to assist disability service providers with the roll-out of COVID-19 vaccines.

## Upcoming event for Carers

### COVID-19 Vaccine for Carers Webinar – 23 March 2021

A webinar will be held for carers to provide key updates on the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out and answer participants' questions.

This webinar will be chaired by Professor Michael Kidd AM, with other panellists Ms Liz Callaghan (Chief Executive Officer, Carers Australia), Bridget Carrick (Department of Health, Director, Vaccine Taskforce) and Mr Luke Mansfield (Group Manager, Market Capability, Department of Social Services).

To tune in and ask questions live on Tuesday, please click on the following link:

Webinar link: <https://publish.viostream.com/app/s-drnzafk>

Tuesday 23 March

12.15pm – 1.15pm (AEDT)

This webinar will be Auslan interpreted.

People don't need to register beforehand and they can be anonymous when asking a question if they wish.

The webinar will be published on the Department of Health's website so people can watch it after the event when it's convenient.

You may like to pass these event details to families and carers.