

March 12, 2024

Dear Facility Administrators,

With overall respiratory viral illnesses (i.e. COVID-19, RSV, Influenza) continuing to be above the annual average threshold, DC Health is requesting facilities to continue vaccination reporting.

The intent of this notification is to provide information to nursing home and assisted living providers on the most effective tool to protect anyone from COVID-19 and/or influenza - ensuring eligible residents have consented and remain up to date with all vaccines recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Control (CDC).

The DC Department of Health (DC Health), Health Regulation and Licensing Administration, Community Health Administration, and Center for Policy, Planning, and Evaluation are aware of the increased risk of COVID-19 and influenza outbreaks in nursing homes and assisted living facilities and want to ensure residents and their families have tools to prevent respiratory illnesses. Facilities must continue to comply with all guidelines set forth on infection prevention and control measures necessary to prevent COVID-19 and influenza including the current guidance from the CDC and DC Health, to prevent the spread and decrease the risk of death for one of the District's most vulnerable populations.

To monitor vaccination status, DC Health must maintain accurate and up-to-date vaccination information for residents of nursing homes and assisted living residences. **DC Health is requesting each facility to provide the following information weekly until at least May 31, 2024:**

- Total number of residents in your facility.
- Total number of residents who have received a current monovalent dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Total number of residents who have received the annual 2023-2024 influenza vaccine.

You should submit your responses weekly via this link: <https://dchealth.dc.gov/page/covid-19-reporting-requirements>. If DC Health determines an extension of this timeframe is warranted, formal notification will be provided.

The COVID-19 pandemic taught us that while it is extremely important to know the number of residents who have been vaccinated, it is equally important to know the number of individuals who have refused. This information helps to refocus education efforts and provides a comprehensive view of the healthcare landscape as it relates to respiratory illness. To assist, **DC Health is requesting you report your facility's number of vaccine refusals for the COVID-19 vaccines and for influenza vaccines.** This information should be reported through your normal reporting mechanism to your Epidemiology technical assistant at DC Health.

We recognize the importance of health literacy regarding the risks and benefits of vaccinations and know that patient education is paramount in helping residents or their legal representatives make informed health-related decisions. Facilities are reminded that it is their duty and obligation to provide education to residents regarding the benefits and risks of vaccinations. It also encourages vaccine uptake amongst our most vulnerable population. All facilities should note the information found in [QSO-21-19-NH](#) and [DCMR Title 22B-3222 Immunizations](#) for nursing homes and individual policies and procedures for assisted living providers per [DCMR Title 22B-10110](#) vaccinations and infection control practices.

DC Health is continuing its efforts to ensure equitable access to vaccines. Please contact the Immunization Division at Doh.Immunization@dc.gov if your facility is experiencing challenges with access and administration. Some of you may also be scheduling clinics through private pharmacies. As these events occur, continue to report all positive resident and staff cases per DC reporting requirements to coronavirus.hai@dc.gov and for any additional questions or concerns.

As you each continue to educate residents and staff on the importance of vaccinations, we encourage providers to also consider additional education on infection control prevention. Facilities are also encouraged to take advantage of free resources like Project First Line to supplement educational efforts. Those interested in getting access can reach out to DCPFL@dc.gov for assistance.

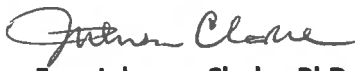
Just as we did before, it is time for us to implement plans to ensure that residents are safe in our facilities. Through vaccination and proper infection control practices, we can decrease the likelihood of a respiratory outbreak related to COVID-19 and FLU in nursing homes and assisted living facilities in the District.

Thank you for your continued partnership and your service to the residents of the District of Columbia.

Sincerely,



Arian R. Gibson, M.S.
Senior Deputy Director
Health Regulation and Licensing Administration



Fern Johnson-Clarke, PhD
Epidemiology, Surveillance, and Reporting Branch Director, COVID-19
Senior Deputy Director
Center for Policy, Planning and Evaluation



Robin (Diggs) Perdue, MPH
Senior Deputy Director
Community Health Administration