

Fact sheet on COVID-19 vaccinations and testing for direct payments recipients and their PAs

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Making a booking

Booking a vaccination through the council call centre is currently **only** available to paid carers, not for unpaid carers or other people living in the same household as the person receiving the direct payment.

If you as a direct payment recipient or your employed personal assistants need a vaccination appointment call **0207 364 3030**.

Unpaid carers or carers receiving carers allowance are asked to register with the carers centre <https://ccth.org.uk/contact/registration-form/> and to register as a carer with their GP. You will then be contacted to arrange your vaccination.

Before you try to make a vaccination appointment

Please make sure that you have checked the following before booking an appointment:

- It must have been at least 7 days since you received a flu vaccination before you can receive the COVID-19 vaccination.
- If you have been symptomatic or tested positive for COVID-19, it must be at least 28 days since your test or when symptoms started.
- If you are pregnant, a clinical assessment is required. Please contact your GP prior to booking a vaccination appointment.
- If you have ever experienced severe [anaphylaxis](#) (a severe and potentially life-threatening reaction to a trigger such as an allergy), please contact your GP prior to booking a vaccination appointment.
- If you are taking the blood thinning medication [Warfarin](#), you will need to check your international normalised ration (INR) checks are up to date and that your latest INR level is within a normal range. Please contact your GP prior to booking a vaccination appointment.

Booking a second vaccination appointment

- You should not use this system to book a second dose now.
- When attending your first vaccination appointment, you will be informed of the process for your second dose.

- If you have already attended your first vaccination appointment and require further information on the process for receiving your second dose, please refer to the [‘When will I receive my second dose?’](#) section in the frequently asked questions later in this document.

Potential side effects, and planning the timing of your vaccination

You cannot catch COVID-19 itself from having the vaccination, but some people do experience side effects from it. Most people have no or mild side effects, such as headache or feeling a bit tired. However, some people can have more significant side effects such as a raised temperature and feeling a bit like they have a cold or flu. These symptoms normally last less than a week. Full details of possible side effects can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-vaccination-what-to-expect-after-vaccination/what-to-expect-after-your-covid-19-vaccination>

Depending on the sort of caring support needs that you have, and whether symptoms like this might affect you more than non-disabled people, you may want to make considerations when organising the vaccination times for you and your PAs, such as:

- Putting contingency plans in place if potential side effects of the vaccination might mean that you need additional support yourself.
- Your PA avoiding having a vaccination just before a shift (in case they start feeling ill during the shift).

Attending your vaccination appointment

When you arrive for your appointment **you will be asked to show your ID**, which will be matched against your name.

Please make sure you arrive on time to your appointment but do not arrive early. There is very limited waiting space (particularly at Cable Street) and you may have to queue in the street, so please wear something warm and waterproof. Wear a face covering if you are able to do so.

Please attend on your own if you are able to or accompanied by no more than one adult if you require assistance. Do not bring children with you.

When calling to make your booking, you will be able to ask for someone from Age UK to escort you to and from your vaccination appointment if you are:

- You are over the age of 65 years (unless there is a diagnosis of dementia or similar condition).
- Living alone or with another person who meets the service criteria.
- Have no family or friends who can escort you.
- You are in receipt of shielding letter.

Frequently Asked Questions

I recently had my flu vaccination. When can I have my COVID-19 vaccination?

Please allow at least seven days between having these different vaccinations.

I have a history of allergies. Can I have my vaccination?

Please consult with your doctor if you are unsure about whether you can have the vaccination.

I, or someone in my household, has recently tested positive for COVID-19. When can I have my vaccination?

Please wait 28 days from onset of first symptoms or test date (whichever is earlier) to have your vaccination.

I received an invitation but my partner did not. Can they attend with me for their vaccination?

No, vaccinations are only available for direct payment recipients and their employed personal assistants by appointment only.

I live with a carer, can they have their vaccination?

Unpaid carers are now being offered the COVID-19 vaccination as part of Priority Group 6 rollout. In order for an unpaid carer to be eligible for the vaccination, they should meet at least one of the following criteria:

- Are in receipt of, or entitled to, a **carer's allowance** and/or
- If you provide significant amount of close contact personal care to someone who is **clinically vulnerable**.

If they meet any **one** of the above criteria, they should contact the Carers Centre Tower Hamlets and complete the **registration form** at www.ccth.org.uk, call 020 7790 1765 or email enquiries@ccth.org.uk.

I have heard there are different vaccinations available, how do I choose which one I will receive?

Due to uncertainty around vaccination deliveries, you will not be offered a choice over which vaccination you receive. We will update this page should this change.

I am housebound, how do I get my vaccination?

Housebound patients should have been contacted by their GP. If you are housebound and have not heard from your GP then please get in contact with your GP to ensure that you are correctly listed as housebound and that your GP has up-to-date contact details for you.

I am unable to get to the vaccination centre, can you arrange transport?

The council cannot arrange transport for you but you can use part of your direct payment to arrange travel to the vaccination centre if you wish.

If you are aged 50+, you can also contact Age UK East London on 020 8981 7124 or 07754 751079 who are offering a COVID-19 vaccination support service to help people get to their vaccination appointments.

When will I receive my second dose?

Your second dose of the vaccine will be given approximately 11-12 weeks after the first dose. You should not use this call centre to book a second dose now. You will be informed of the process for arranging to have your second dose when attending your first vaccination appointment.

If you have already had the first dose of the vaccination, the process for receiving the second will depend on where you had this. Find the venue where your first vaccination took place in the table below for advice on how to arrange your second dose:

Venue	Advice on second doses
<p>Primary Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queen Marys University (QMUL) • Newby Place • Cable Street 	<p>You will be contacted by text message no sooner than 8 weeks and no later than 11 weeks after your first shot to book your second through a primary care online portal. A link will be sent at the time.</p> <p>Please check that the number you provided when booking your vaccine is still the best number to contact you on.</p> <p>If it has been >11 weeks since your first jab and you have not been contacted please speak with PeoplePlus or email PHCov19@towerhamlets.gov.uk providing the following information;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your name and team name • Employer's name • Date of birth • Contact number and email address • Date you received your first dose • Type of vaccine received (Pfizer or Astra Zeneca) • Venue you received your first dose
<p>Barts Health Trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Royal London Hospital • Whipps Cross • Newham Hospital • Barts Hospital 	<p>You will be contacted by text message or phone call no sooner than 8 weeks and no later than 11 weeks after your first shot to book your second.</p> <p>Please check that the number you provided when booking your vaccine is still the best number to contact you on.</p> <p>If it has been more than 11 weeks since your first jab and you have not been contacted please speak with PeoplePlus or email PHCov19@towerhamlets.gov.uk providing the following information;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your name and team name • Employer's name • Date of birth • Contact number and email address • Date you received your first dose • Type of vaccine received (Pfizer or Astra Zeneca) • Venue you received your first dose
<p>National Vaccination Centre ExCel Centre or Westfield Stratford</p>	<p>Please use this link to book an appointment for your second dose.</p> <p>https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/</p> <p>If you are having issues using the portal to book please speak with PeoplePlus or email PHCov19@towerhamlets.gov.uk providing the following information;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your name and team name • Employer's name • Date of birth • Contact number and email address • Date you received your first dose • Type of vaccine received (Pfizer or Astra Zeneca) • Venue you received your first dose

Can my PAs get vaccinated if they are self-employed?

Yes they can, please contact the council vaccination helpline to book on **0207 364 3030**.

Is the vaccine vegan/vegetarian friendly?

There is no material of foetal or animal origin in either vaccine.

Will you use the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccination more because it's cheaper and easier to store?

Both vaccines are classed as being very effective. The Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccination is easier to store and transport, meaning we can deliver them in more places. We also expect to have more doses of the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccination available as they are manufactured in the UK. Therefore, we would expect that most people are likely to receive this vaccination over the coming weeks and months.

Occasionally, one vaccine may be more suitable than another based on your medical history. This will be discussed with you as necessary by your clinician.

How effective is the COVID-19 vaccination?

The first dose of the COVID-19 vaccination should give you good protection from coronavirus. But you need to have the two doses of the vaccination to give you longer lasting protection.

There is a chance you might still get or spread coronavirus even once you have had the vaccination. This means it is important to:

- Continue to follow social distancing guidance.
- If you can, wear something that covers your nose and mouth in places where it's hard to stay away from other people.

Pfizer vaccine vs Oxford vaccine effectiveness facts:

- i) Both vaccines have been shown to be **safe** and offer **high levels of protection**, and have been given regulatory approval by the MHRA (Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency)
- ii) The NHS would not offer any COVID-19 vaccinations to the public until it is safe to do so
- iii) Oxford vaccination data indicates the vaccine has 62% efficacy when one full dose is given followed by another full dose, but when people were given a half dose followed by a full dose at least a month later, its efficacy rose to 90%. The combined analysis from both dosing regimens resulted in an average efficacy of 70.4%. Pfizer efficacy after two doses was shown to be 95%

Should people who have already had COVID-19 or are suffering from 'Long Covid' get vaccinated?

Yes, if they are in a priority group identified by JCVI (Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation). Getting vaccinated is just as important for those who have already had COVID-19 as it is for those who haven't, including those who have mild residual symptoms. Where people are suffering significant ongoing complications from COVID-19 they should discuss whether or not to have a vaccine now with a clinician.

Note that if you have had COVID-19 you cannot be vaccinated for at least 28 days since symptoms first appeared or the date of a positive test, whichever is the earliest. This is not because the vaccine will make the illness worse, but to make sure if your COVID-19 symptoms get worse, that this isn't confused with any side effects of the vaccine.

Helpful links

Dr Abdul Wadud Kamali, GP at the Limehouse Practice in Tower Hamlets, appeared on Bengali community TV Station, TV One, to discuss the COVID-19 vaccine in Sylheti, dispelling myths and providing reassurance. You can watch and share it [here](#).

Dr Hasnain Abbasi, GP Director at Tower Hamlets COVID-19 Vaccine Centre and his team encouraged his local community to take the vaccine and tackled common misconceptions – watch the video [here](#).

Senior Imam at East London Mosque, Sheikh Mohammed Mahmoud also encouraged his community to take the vaccine and helped to tackle conspiracies around Covid immunisation – watch the video [here](#).

NHS England's Associate Chief Clinical Information Officer and a practicing NHS doctor, Dr Harpreet Sood, highlighted that the vaccine has been endorsed by all religious groups – watch the video [here](#).

Easy-read information on COVID-19 vaccination can be found [here](#) and the latest national advice, including guidance for primary care and a full list of vaccination sites is [here](#).

Translated, easy-read and further information

A variety of information about the vaccine is now available in more languages including Albanian, **Arabic**, **Bengali**, **Chinese**, **Farsi**, **Gujarati**, Hindi, **Nepali**, **Punjabi**, Polish, Romanian, **Somali**, Spanish, Tagalog and Turkish:

[COVID-19 vaccination: guide for older adults](#)

[What to expect after your COVID-19 vaccination](#)

[Why you are being asked to wait](#)

[Women of childbearing age, currently pregnant or breastfeeding](#)

Easy-read information on COVID-19 vaccination can be found [here](#) and the latest national advice, including guidance for primary care and a full list of vaccination sites is [here](#).