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Cook County Department of Public Health Plans for COVID-19 Vaccine Rollout to Youth Ages 5-to-11, Pending Federal Authorization

*Vaccinating Children Early Will Help Keep Holidays Safe
For Cook County Families*

(Forest Park, IL)—Today, the Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH) announced plans to roll out COVID-19 vaccine to youth ages 5-11, pending authorization from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)'s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP).

Studies have shown the vaccine to be safe and effective in younger children and the vaccines have been proven to provide the best protection against severe outcomes from COVID-19.

"Vaccinating as many people as possible – including our children – is the only way to put this pandemic behind us," said Kiran Joshi, Co-Lead and Senior Medical Officer of CCDPH. "With the holiday season approaching, vaccinating children means we can safely celebrate with extended family and friends – something that wasn't a safe option last year."

CCDPH is working with school districts in suburban Cook County to provide outreach, education, and on-site COVID-19 vaccination clinics. CCDPH is also working with Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) and Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) regarding outreach to schools in suburban Cook County to share information and raise awareness about the ability of creating on-site clinics.

In addition, CCDPH is working with the Illinois Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (ICAAP) to recruit more pediatricians to provide COVID-19 vaccination in their offices.

Pharmacies, hospitals, and other clinics have also reported working on logistics and training to be able to provide COVID-19 vaccinations to children shortly after approval.

“Keeping our children safe is an important public health issue; during a pandemic it takes on an even greater significance,” said Dr. Jacqueline Korpics, a pediatrician and the Medical Director for the CCDPH COVID-19 Response. “Measures such as social distancing and wearing a mask remain important but vaccinating as many children as possible keeps the students, staff and everyone in school protected and healthy. We urge parents to vaccinate their children, for the health and safety of all of us.”

Dr. Korpics will appear on CCDPH’s “Ask the Doctor” Facebook Live series on Nov. 3 at 7 p.m. to answer all questions related to child vaccinations. It is anticipated that final approval of vaccinations for those ages 5 to 11 will be given that day.

While planning is still underway, there will be a number of ways for families to get their children vaccinated against COVID-19, including:

- **Cook County Health** continues to provide COVID-19 vaccine to all eligible ages at all sites throughout Cook County. Locations can be found at myshotcookcounty.com/
- **The Cook County Mobile Team** provides on-site vaccinations to many locations including schools and daycares. Events at myshotcookcounty.com/
- **CCDPH-hosted clinics and community-based organization vaccination events** – details will be posted at the [CCDPH calendar](#).
- **Pediatric and family health care providers** – CCDPH recommends families first reach out to their medical home to see if appointments are available.
- **School clinic sites** – CCDPH partners and IEMA will offer a number of opportunities for students to get vaccinated – [go to CCDPH calendar](#) or talk to your school.
- **Local pharmacies** – across the county, some pharmacy locations will be provided vaccines in the first one-to-two weeks after approval and each have their own registration processes (included below).
 - Jewel-Osco: [Register online](#)
 - Walgreens: [Register online](#), call your local Walgreens or 1-800-WALGREENS (1-800-925-4733)
 - CVS: [Register online](#), call your local CVS or 1-800-679-9691
 - Mariano's: [Register online](#)
 - Walmart: Call 833-886-0023, Option 1
- Select **children’s hospitals** will host pediatric vaccine events – check hospital websites for dates and more information.

In addition, for safety and convenience of residents, CCDPH offers the following vaccination service options:

- Destination: Vaccination: Free rides to and from vaccination locations are available by calling **833-308-1988** any day between 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Child seats and other requests will be accommodated.
- In-home vaccinations. Call the hotline 833-308-1988 or visit vaccine.cookcountyil.gov/ to request an in-home vaccination appointment.

While using the same “formula” as the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for adults, the Pfizer dose for 5-to-11-year-olds is smaller and will be distributed in their own vials.

All COVID-19 vaccinations are free. No insurance or government ID are required. Learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine and find vaccines for your family at <https://vaccine.cookcountyil.gov/> or call 833-308-1988.

At most vaccination locations, parents must accompany the child. Some providers require only a signed consent form from a parent or guardian.

Clinical trials – with thousands of volunteers – have shown the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to be safe and effective for children age 5 and up. As with all COVID-19 vaccines, every study, every phase, and every trial to determine the vaccine is safe and effective for children was reviewed by the FDA, CDC, and a vaccine safety group. Additional trials are underway for the other vaccines and additional age groups.