



Utah Department of Corrections

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

January 22, 2020

Dear Incarcerated Individual,

It's an honor to address you for the first time as the Executive Director of the Utah Department of Corrections. I look forward to working alongside all of our stakeholders, including you, in accomplishing our mission.

We plan to continue keeping you informed through these newsletters, and I want to primarily address a hot topic in this first message: vaccines.

Over the last few weeks, the Utah Department of Health began rolling out its three-phased plan for vaccine distribution.

Last week, all UDC staff who interact with those incarcerated or on supervision with the State had the opportunity to be vaccinated.

Incarcerated individuals are set to be vaccinated as part of phase two in the Utah Department of Health's plan. While the vaccine is not mandatory, we are hopeful that many of you will take advantage of this opportunity. Such steps will help us return to normal operations.

As we communicate with the Utah Department of Health, we are learning that vaccine distribution within our corrections system will likely be a phased approach that is consistent with what is happening in the communities.

More vulnerable and high-risk incarcerated individuals (based initially on age) will likely receive the vaccine first,

and hopefully in the next couple months all of you will have had the opportunity to be vaccinated.

On the back of this sheet you will find more information regarding the COVID-19 vaccine.

While a return to normal will be gradual, we are excited that video visiting is close to roll out and testing is just about complete.

Please encourage your families and friends to follow our two-step process for video visiting, which includes renewing their visiting application and uploading their photo ID. They can find the full instructions on our public website at corrections.utah.gov.

We still plan to provide 10 free 15-minute phone calls per week for the time being.

We remain hopeful as we navigate through this pandemic, and we appreciate your continued patience and perseverance during these difficult times.

Brian Nielson

*Executive Director
Utah Department of Corrections*



COVID-19 Vaccine Frequent Asked Questions

Please review the information below from the Utah Department of Health

Why should I get vaccinated?

We understand you may be concerned about getting vaccinated for COVID-19. Even though these vaccines are being developed as quickly as possible, it is important to know they are using the same safety approval processes and procedures they use for other vaccines authorized or approved for use. Safety is a top priority, and there are many reasons to get vaccinated.

- Clinical trials of COVID-19 vaccines must first show they are safe and effective before any vaccine can be authorized or approved for use in the United States.
- The known and potential benefits of a COVID-19 vaccine must outweigh the known and potential risks of the vaccine for use under what is known as an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA).

Is there no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you?

Most people who get COVID-19 recover within a few weeks. However, there is no way to know in advance how COVID-19 will affect you. Based on what we know about vaccines for other diseases, experts believe getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting seriously ill, even if you do get COVID-19. COVID-19 can have serious, life-threatening complications. If you get sick, you could spread the disease to friends, family, and others around you. Getting vaccinated for COVID-19 is a safer way to help build protection. The vaccine will help keep you from getting COVID-19.

- Experts believe that getting a COVID-19 vaccine may help keep you from getting seriously ill even if you do get the virus, based on what we know about vaccines for other diseases and from the data from the clinical trials. Updated 1/6/2021 Coronavirus.Utah.gov
- If you get vaccinated it may also protect people around you, especially people at higher-risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- Vaccines are only authorized or approved after they are carefully evaluated in clinical trials and will make you much less likely to get COVID-19.

We think of COVID-19 as a respiratory disease that mostly affects the lungs, but it can also damage many other organs as well. This organ damage may increase your risk of long-term health problems. We are seeing many cases where people — even those with mild symptoms — continue to suffer complications and symptoms months after they are considered “recovered.” There is not enough data yet to tell us how long these complications from COVID-19 will last.

Do the COVID-19 vaccines work?

We understand some people may be concerned about getting vaccinated for COVID-19. Even though these vaccines are being developed as quickly as possible, it is important to know they are using the same safety approval processes and procedures they use for other vaccines authorized or approved for use. Safety is a top priority, and there are many reasons to get vaccinated.

Two vaccine manufacturers have released initial results of their clinical trials. Their data show that COVID-19 vaccines are very effective. Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are about 90-95% effective at preventing COVID-19. This means only about 5-10% of people who got the vaccine showed any symptoms of COVID-19. This tells us the vaccine will protect most of the people who get it.

Scientists are still learning whether the vaccines also prevent you from spreading the virus that causes COVID-19 to others, even after you are fully immunized. According to the FDA, most vaccines that protect you from viral illnesses are also effective at preventing the spread of the virus. It is likely the COVID-19 vaccines will do the same but until scientists and doctors learn more, it is important for everyone to continue taking precautions like covering your nose and mouth with a mask.



COVID-19 Vaccine Frequent Asked Questions

... Continued ...

How do vaccines work?

The immune system—your body's defense against infection

To understand how COVID-19 vaccines work, it helps to understand how your body fights illness. When germs like the virus that causes COVID-19 get in your body, they attack and multiply. This invasion of germs is called an infection. An infection is what causes you to be sick. Your immune system uses several tools to fight infection. Your blood has red and white blood cells. Red blood cells carry oxygen to tissues and organs. White blood cells, or immune cells, fight infection. There are different types of white blood cells that fight infection in different ways:

- Macrophages are white blood cells that swallow up and digest germs and dead or dying cells. Macrophages leave behind parts of the invading germs called antigens. Your body thinks antigens are dangerous and triggers antibodies to attack them.
- B-lymphocytes are defensive white blood cells that make antibodies to attack the pieces of the virus macrophages leave behind.
- T-lymphocytes are another type of defensive white blood cell that attack cells in your body that have already been infected.

The human body has a really good system to protect you from disease. Scientists have been able to copy the system your body uses to fight infection and use it to create vaccines. Vaccines have helped protect millions of people from many diseases that used to kill thousands and thousands of people every year. Vaccines use something called vaccine-induced immunity to protect you from disease.

The first time you are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, it can take several days or weeks for your body to make and use all the germ-fighting tools needed to get over the infection. After the infection, your immune system remembers what it learned about how to protect your body against that disease.

Immunity is how your body decides which material in your body is supposed to be there and gets rid of any foreign material (anything your body says shouldn't be there). When germs enter your body, your immune system tells your body they don't belong. Your immune system then creates antibodies to fight and get rid of the antigens. This is the system your body uses to protect you from infectious disease. Your body keeps a few T-lymphocytes, called memory cells, that go into action quickly if you get the same virus again. When the familiar antigens are detected, your B-lymphocytes make antibodies to attack them. Experts are still learning how long these memory cells protect a person against the virus that causes COVID-19.

How do vaccines protect me?

A vaccine is a type of medicine that protects you from infectious diseases by introducing your body's immune system to a virus or bacteria in a safe way. This allows your immune system to make antibodies that are specific to the disease-causing virus or bacteria.

COVID-19 vaccines help your body develop immunity to the virus that causes COVID-19 without having to get the illness. Different types of vaccines work in different ways to offer protection. All vaccines leave your body a supply of "memory" T-lymphocytes and B-lymphocytes that will remember how to fight that virus in the future.

It usually takes a few weeks after you get a vaccination for your body to produce T-lymphocytes and B-lymphocytes. This means that it is still possible you could get infected with COVID-19 just before, or just after, you are vaccinated. You may then get sick because the vaccine did not have enough time to protect you.

Sometimes you can get symptoms or side effects, such as a fever, after you get a vaccination. These symptoms are normal and are a sign that your body is building immunity.

