



**COVID-19  
RESPONSE  
VACCINES**

# FAQ: UN SYSTEM-WIDE COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME

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## GENERAL INFORMATION & ELIGIBILITY

### 1. HOW WILL I RECEIVE MY COVID-19 VACCINATION?

The UN has requested Member States to include UN personnel in their respective national/host country COVID-19 vaccination programmes. While confirming the inclusion of UN personnel within their national planning, most Member States have advised that they will be providing the vaccine free of charge. The vaccine may also be available and accessed through a primary care provider, and in many cases that cost will be covered by medical insurance.

In countries where there is no national programme in place, or in which UN personnel are not included in the national distribution programme, the UN Department of Operational Support (DOS) has been tasked by the Secretary-General to identify alternative arrangements for making the vaccine available. DOS is working to ensure alternative arrangements are put in place for UN personnel.

Member States have also been requested by the Secretary-General to follow the [WHO's Values Framework and Prioritization Roadmap](#) for the fair and equitable allocation and prioritization of the COVID-19 vaccine.

### 2. WHO IS INCLUDED IN THE UN SYSTEM-WIDE COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME?

In locations where there are no national/ host country COVID-19 vaccination programmes and where UN personnel may not have access to the COVID-19 vaccine, the UN, through the Department of Operational Support (DOS), is working to ensure alternative arrangements are put in place for such personnel through a UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme.



The UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme intends to support the following categories of individuals - who are serving and/or residing in the duty stations in which the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme will be carried out:

- a. UN System personnel:
  - i. Staff members,
  - ii. UN Volunteers,
  - iii. Interns,
  - iv. Consultants and Individual Contractors, and
  - v. Other personnel holding a direct UN contract.
- b. Eligible family members: spouses/partners and dependent children recognized under the staff regulations and rules of the respective UN system organizations, who are authorized to reside at the duty station with the staff member or who reside at a location where the UN is running a vaccination campaign.
- c. Accompanying eligible family members of non-staff personnel as defined by the UN system organizations' staff regulations and rules and policies, who are authorized to reside at the duty station with such personnel or who reside at a location where the UN is running a vaccination campaign.
- d. Military and police personnel deployed by the United Nations and accompanying eligible dependents, as well as AMISOM troops and personnel.
- e. UN System retirees in receipt of a pension benefit from the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF) or from the IMF Staff Retirement Plan (SRP), or the World Bank SRP who have established their normal place of residence in a country where the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme is carried out.
- f. All personnel of international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) that are engaged by UN system organizations in the implementation of their respective mandates, and the accompanying dependents of those INGO's international personnel, provided the INGO has been sponsored by a participating UN organization and the individual's eligibility has been validated.
- g. Personnel of key institutional contractors providing support in the countries concerned provided the contractor has been sponsored by a participating UN organization and the individual's eligibility has been validated.
- h. Inclusion of additional categories of frontline personnel remains under discussion and active consideration.

Please see [UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme Eligibility document](#) for details.

### **3. HOW WILL THE UN PRIORITIZE VACCINATIONS IN THE UN SYSTEM-WIDE COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME?**

The UN will base its prioritization roadmap for UN personnel and eligible dependents on the [WHO Strategic Advisory Group of Experts \(SAGE\) Roadmap](#) for prioritizing uses of COVID-19 vaccines in the context of limited supply.



This roadmap allows for individuals who are at greater risk of exposure to the virus, or who will likely suffer a more severe course of illness if contracting the virus to receive the vaccine first. Such priority groups will include in priority workers at highest risk, such as health care workers and other front-line workers, as well as older adults, and those of any age with underlying health conditions.

It should be noted that all UN personnel receiving the vaccines from national authorities should adhere to the local health authorities' directives on prioritization of individuals. While WHO makes recommendations for prioritization, not all countries follow exactly the sequence outlined in the [WHO prioritization roadmap](#).

#### 4. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE UN SYSTEM-WIDE COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME AND COVAX?

The UN System-Wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme is focused on those individuals listed under section 2, above, who are serving and/or residing in the duty stations where there are no national/ host country COVID-19 vaccination programmes and where they may not have access to the COVID-19 vaccine. Together with other existing mechanisms, the roll-out of this Programme will provide a significant boost to the ability of UN personnel to stay and deliver and reduce the burden on the national/host country. Vaccinating our personnel allows us to effectively deliver on our mandates, to support the people and communities we serve, and to contribute to our on-going work to recover better together from the pandemic. The UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme is a separate effort from the on-going COVAX effort which is making vaccines available to populations within countries. Every effort is being made to align the efforts of the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme with the COVAX to ensure equitable access to vaccines worldwide.

#### 5. WHEN CAN I EXPECT TO RECEIVE MY VACCINATION?

Most UN personnel should receive the COVID-19 vaccine through their own national/host country vaccination programmes, according to the timelines and prioritization guidelines of those programmes. UN personnel should be receiving their vaccination based on their particular status (age, health status, etc.) within the local health authorities' or [WHO's prioritization roadmap](#).

In duty stations where vaccination through the national programme may not be possible, the Department of Operational Support (DOS) is working to ensure alternative arrangements are put in place for UN personnel and their eligible dependents via the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. Local Vaccine Deployment Coordinators under the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme have been nominated in most duty stations. They manage the local deployment team (logistics, communications, medical) and the roll out of the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme locally. To see the current list, please click [here](#).

Additional information will be communicated as soon as it becomes available, through the [UN COVID-19 webpage](#), the [iSeek COVID-19 page](#), and your office.

#### 6. IS COVID-19 VACCINATION MANDATORY FOR UN PERSONNEL?



COVID-19 vaccination is not mandatory for UN personnel and their dependents, but it is strongly recommended.

The UN recommends UN personnel and their dependents receive a COVID-19 vaccine that has been approved by WHO and/or by two Stringent Regulatory Authorities (SRAs) for emergency use. Any immunization procedure, regardless of whether it has been approved by WHO and/or by two Stringent Regulatory Authorities (SRAs), should always be based on the recipient's informed consent.

The UN provides regular information from different sources on the state of progress in the field of research and development of vaccines globally, with a view to assisting UN personnel and their family members when they are in the process of making an informed decision as to whether to participate in a vaccination programme. In addition, the UN seeks to coordinate its system-wide action based on the recommendations of the WHO as lead health agency, while taking into account applicable national COVID-19 regulations in the different host countries. UN personnel and their family members should consult their healthcare provider or treating physician for additional information.

All UN personnel and dependents participating in national vaccination campaigns, or in the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme, should obtain comprehensive information/briefing from their healthcare provider or treating physician on the type of vaccine being offered, in order to be able to make an informed decision about whether or not to take the vaccine.

- [More WHO information on COVID-19 vaccines](#)
- [More information from the UN Medical Directors on COVID-19 vaccines](#)

Consistent with the UN standards of conduct and host country agreements, where applicable, UN personnel are expected to respect and comply with instructions, preventive and protective measures and other anti-COVID-19 policies of the host country.

## 7. ARE MEMBERS OF MILITARY CONTINGENTS AND FORMED POLICE UNITS DEPLOYED IN UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS ALSO ELIGIBLE?

Yes. All military and police personnel deployed in UN peacekeeping operations where the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme is rolled out are eligible to be vaccinated under the Programme. For members of UN military contingents and formed police units, please see Guidance Document: [COVID-19 VACCINATION administration process for members of military contingents and formed police units deployed in UN peacekeeping operations](#).

## 8. WILL VACCINATIONS BECOME A REQUIREMENT FOR PHYSICAL RETURN TO THE PREMISES IN THE NEXT NORMAL WHEN WE GET TO THAT STAGE?

Whilst the UN [system] organizations do not currently intend to make COVID-19 vaccination mandatory, including in the context of a physical return to the premises, receiving such vaccination is strongly recommended. While the WHO does not recommend the use of "Vaccine passports" at this time, it appears that many individual countries are considering this



strategy and therefore may require vaccination for certain activities/travel.

## 9. WILL I GET A CERTIFICATE OF VACCINATION?

Upon administration of the requisite vaccine dosage through the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme, a certificate of vaccination is generated through the Programme's registration platform (the "Platform"). The certificate generated by the Platform uses a standardized format, similar to the one used by the WHO in its "International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis" (Yellow) vaccination booklet.

In addition to the certificate of vaccination generated through the Platform, the WHO [International Certificate of Vaccination or Prophylaxis](#) can also be filled out by the medical personnel of the UN/TCC/PCC clinics and stamped using the clinic's usual stamp (if available). The vaccine name and lot number should be noted. The medical evaluator and vaccine administrator (if a different person) need to sign the health booklet. Please see guidance [here](#).

Note: This certificate may not allow the holder of the certificate to avoid travel restrictions put in place by the country(ies) of destination and may not be accepted as evidence of COVID-19 vaccination status in such country(ies). As responses to the pandemic continue to rapidly evolve, it is highly advisable to check the latest travel regulations. As scientific information relative to vaccination against COVID-19 as well as tests for immunity to COVID-19 also continue to evolve, noting the appearance of variants of the 2019-nCoV coronavirus, it is important to stay informed of the applicable public health measures in place in the country of destination.

## 10. WILL THE VACCINATION CERTIFICATE INCLUDE COVID-19 VACCINATIONS I RECEIVED THROUGH A NATIONAL PROGRAM?

No. The certificate issued from the Platform is issued only to individuals who have received the COVID-19 vaccines administered through the UN system-wide COVID-19 vaccination programme. Individuals that have received both doses from The UN Programme will receive a full certificate. Individuals that have received one dose from The UN Programme will only receive a certificate for that single dose.

A certificate will not be issued by the United Nations for individuals who received their vaccinations through a national or other programme and such individuals should obtain a certificate or proof of vaccination from the competent medical authority that administered the vaccine.

## 11. WHICH EUROPEAN COUNTRIES ACCEPT THE COVISHIELD AS PROOF OF VACCINATION AGAINST COVID-19?

The reported 17 European countries that accept Covishield vaccinations as proof of immunity against COVID-19 include:

Austria  
Belgium



Bulgaria  
Estonia  
Finland  
France  
Germany  
Greece  
Hungary  
Iceland  
Ireland  
Latvia  
The Netherlands  
Slovenia  
Spain  
Sweden  
Switzerland

Please note that the above list can change without notice as countries continuously adapt and change their guidance.

## 12. WILL THE VACCINE BE COVERED UNDER UN MEDICAL INSURANCE PLANS?

Yes. Similar to other vaccines, coverage of the vaccine is foreseen under UN medical plans when recommended by the local health authorities and/or the WHO, and when vaccines are not offered free of charge by national governments. All vaccines administered under the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme are administered free of cost to the individual receiving the vaccine.

## 13. AT WHAT RATE WILL THE VACCINES AND THE (PARA)MEDICAL FEE TO ADMINISTER THE VACCINE, BE COVERED?

The coverage level will depend on the medical insurance plan one is covered by. The latest updates can be obtained through the third-party administrator administering your medical plan:

- UNHQ medical plans Aetna PPO, Empire PPO, UN Worldwide Plan or UN MIP
- Geneva-based plan UNSMIS
- Vienna-based plans, insured through Allianz

## 14. WILL THE MEDICAL PLANS LIMIT REIMBURSEMENT FOR VACCINES UP TO A MAXIMUM AMOUNT?

There is no pre-determined maximum amount. Vaccines will be reimbursed up to the reasonable and customary level for the specific vaccine. Reasonable and customary refers to the prevailing pattern of charges for the vaccine at the duty station where the vaccine is administered as reasonably determined by the third-party administrator.

## 15. IF A STAFF MEMBER DECIDES TO RECEIVE A VACCINE THROUGH THE PRIVATE SECTOR INSTEAD OF THE



## NATIONAL/HOST COUNTRY OR THE UN SYSTEM-WIDE COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME, WILL THE STAFF MEMBER BE REIMBURSED?

Yes. While the national/host country or the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccine Programme are the recommended sources for the vaccine, if staff members are unable to get the vaccine through a government or a UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme, staff members will be eligible for reimbursement for vaccination administered by a private provider under their medical insurance plan.

The coverage level will depend on the medical insurance plan one is covered by. The latest updates can be obtained through the third-party administrator administering your medical plan.

## 16. WILL A MEDICAL PRESCRIPTION BE REQUIRED IN ORDER FOR THE COST OF RECEIVING THE VACCINE TO BE COVERED UNDER UN MEDICAL PLANS?

No, third-party administrators will not require a prescription to be submitted in order for coverage to apply, but a prescription may be required in order to obtain the vaccine in any given location.

## 17. WHICH VACCINE IS THE UN ADMINISTERING AS PART OF THE UN SYSTEM-WIDE COVID-19 PROGRAMME?

The UN has acquired doses of Covishield, the version of AstraZeneca/Oxford COVID-19 vaccine manufactured by the Serum Institute of India, approved under emergency use listing procedures (EUL) by WHO.

See COVISHIELD Fact Sheet [here](#).

## 18. ARE COVID-19 VACCINES SAFE?

The World Health Organization (WHO) and its partners are committed to accelerating the development of COVID-19 vaccines while ensuring that all vaccines are as safe as possible. All clinical trials are rigorously evaluating vaccines for safety.

- [More WHO information on the COVID-19 vaccines.](#)
- [More information from the UN Medical Directors regarding COVID-19 vaccines.](#)

## 19. IS THE OXFORD-ASTRAZENECA/COVISHIELD VACCINE SAFE?

Rare adverse events following immunizations should be assessed against the risk of deaths from COVID-19 disease and the potential of the vaccines to prevent infections and reduce deaths due to diseases.

On 7 April 2021 WHO Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety (GACVS) reviewed reports of rare cases of blood clots with low platelets following vaccination with the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine (including Covishield). They reported “that whilst concerning, the events under assessment are very rare, with low numbers reported among the almost 200 million individuals who have received the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine around the world.”



See full GAVCVS statement here: <https://www.who.int/news/item/07-04-2021-interim-statement-of-the-covid-19-subcommittee-of-the-who-global-advisory-committee-on-vaccine-safety>

Those who develop severe symptoms after receiving the vaccine should seek medical attention immediately. By recognizing the signs of blood clots and treating them early, healthcare professionals can help those affected in their recovery and avoid complications.

As part of making an informed decision on whether to receive a vaccine, or the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine, in particular, individuals should read the vaccine Oxford-AstraZeneca Fact Sheet, found at [https://www.seruminstitute.com/pdf/covishield\\_fact\\_sheet.pdf](https://www.seruminstitute.com/pdf/covishield_fact_sheet.pdf) and consult their medical practitioner.

The above information is dynamic and subject to change. As more information becomes available, this FAQ will be updated.

## 20. WILL I BE OFFERED A CHOICE OF VACCINE?

At this time, in most countries, people will not be able to choose the kind or the brand of vaccine they want. This, however, could change as other vaccines are authorized for use and vaccine supplies increase.

## 21. WHAT IF I DO NOT WANT TO RECEIVE THE SPECIFIC TYPE OF VACCINE OFFERED TO ME?

It will be up to the individual to decide if they want to be vaccinated and whether they want to accept the type of vaccine being offered by the national/ host country or the UN System-wide COVID19 Vaccination Programme. The UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme will follow the guidance of the WHO Emergency Use Listing in offering available vaccine. If Host Country medical authorities' guidance on approved vaccines differs from that of WHO, the staff member will be informed and can make a decision accordingly.

## 22. WHAT IF I WANT TO BE VACCINATED IN MY HOME COUNTRY?

That is a personal choice and up to the individual to decide. The UN will not be responsible for the cost of transportation to the home country. Eligible staff members (and their eligible family members) may however take advantage of home leave, family visit or reverse education grant travel to their home country and be vaccinated when the vaccine becomes available there.

## 23. WHAT CAN I DO NOW TO HELP PROTECT MYSELF FROM GETTING COVID-19 AS I WAIT FOR MY VACCINATION, OR SINCE A VACCINE IS NOT YET AVAILABLE IN MY COUNTRY?

You should continue covering your mouth and nose with a mask, washing your hands regularly and staying at least 6 feet (or depending on local health authorities' recommendations) away from others and avoid crowded areas with poor ventilation. These





steps will help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others.

## 24. HOW DO THE VACCINES WORK?

Vaccines are all designed to teach the body's immune system to safely recognize and block the virus that causes COVID-19.

Several different types of vaccines for COVID-19 have been developed, or are in development, including:

- **inactivated or weakened virus vaccines**, which use a form of the virus that has been inactivated or weakened so it doesn't cause disease, but still generates an immune response
- **protein-based vaccines**, which use harmless fragments of proteins or protein shells that mimic the COVID-19 virus to safely generate an immune response
- **viral vector vaccines**, which use a virus that has been genetically engineered so that it can't cause disease but produces coronavirus proteins to safely generate an immune response
- **RNA and DNA vaccines**, a cutting-edge approach that uses genetically engineered RNA or DNA to generate a protein that itself safely prompts an immune response

For more information about all COVID-19 vaccines in development, see this [WHO publication](#)

## 25. CAN I GET SICK WITH COVID-19 FROM THE VACCINE?

No, the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine COVID-19 vaccine does not contain the SARS-CoV-2 virus and cannot give you COVID-19 infection.

However, as with all other vaccines, you may have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building immune protection.

Common side effects observed with the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine COVID-19 vaccine may include:

- On the arm where you receive the vaccine: pain and swelling
- Throughout the rest of your body: fever, chills, tiredness, headache, other flu-like symptoms such as sore throat or runny nose

These side effects may affect your ability to perform daily activities, but they should typically go away within a few days. You are encouraged to read the following information on Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine found at [https://www.seruminstitute.com/pdf/covishield\\_fact\\_sheet.pdf](https://www.seruminstitute.com/pdf/covishield_fact_sheet.pdf).

## 26. IS IT SAFE TO GET A COVID-19 VACCINE IF I HAVE AN UNDERLYING MEDICAL CONDITION?

COVID-19 vaccination is especially important for people with underlying health problems (e.g. heart disease, lung disease, diabetes, hypertension, cancers, poor immunity and obesity). Such individuals are more likely to develop a severe form of COVID-19.

You should always consult with your health care provider if you have specific questions about the COVID-19 vaccine and your health. On very rare occasions, allergic reactions can occur. If you have had allergic reactions to any vaccines, drugs, medical products, foods etc. in the past, you should discuss the vaccination with your healthcare provider.



You are encouraged to read the following information on [vaccine safety and common side effects](#).

## 27. I AM DUE FOR MY ROUTINE PREVENTATIVE TESTS, SHOULD I WAIT UNTIL I GET MY COVID 19 VACCINE? WHAT ABOUT MAMMOGRAM?

It is very important for one's health to maintain the preventative care appointments. Most can safely be done before and after vaccination.

With regard to mammogram, ask your doctor how long you should wait after vaccination to get your mammogram. People who have received a COVID-19 vaccine can have swelling in the lymph nodes (lymphadenopathy) in the underarm near where they got the shot. This swelling is a normal sign that your body is building protection against COVID-19. However, it is possible that this swelling could cause a false reading on a mammogram.

Some experts recommend getting your mammogram before being vaccinated or waiting four to six weeks after getting your vaccine.

## 28. HOW MANY DOSES OF VACCINES HAVE TO BE TAKEN AND AT WHAT TIME INTERVAL?

This depends on the type of vaccine you are given. With most COVID-19 vaccines, you will need two doses in order for them to work, with a few weeks in between. You should get the second shot even if you have side effects after the first dose, unless a vaccination provider or your doctor tells you not to get a second dose.

The recommended dosage for the Astra Zeneca vaccine is two doses given intramuscularly with an interval of 8 to 12 weeks (see [WHO: The AstraZeneca Vaccine - what you need to know](#)). To avoid vaccine surplus, a second dose could be administered following a shorter time interval than the WHO recommended 8 to 12 weeks but within the manufacturer's recommended time interval of 4 to 6 weeks (see document [Recommendations for Management of Vaccine Surplus with short expiration dates](#).)

Different types of vaccines have different vaccination schedules, and other vaccines that are in the process of approval and/or development may require just a single dose.

## 29. WILL I NEED A BOOSTER DOSE?

Not at the present time. As per WHO's most recent guidance (see below), the focus for the time being remains on increasing global vaccination coverage with the primary series (either one or two doses for current EUL vaccines). In the context of ongoing global vaccine supply constraints, administration of booster doses will exacerbate inequities by driving up demand and consuming scarce supply while priority populations in some countries, or subnational settings, have not yet received a primary vaccination series.

Introducing booster doses should be firmly evidence-driven and targeted to the population groups in greatest need (*specifically individuals whose immune system is severely depressed due to either treatment or disease and for whom we would expect a diminished immune*



*response to the standard vaccine regime*). The rationale for implementing booster doses should be guided by evidence on waning vaccine effectiveness, in particular a decline in protection against severe disease in the general population or in high-risk populations, or due to a circulating VOC (variant of concern). To date, the evidence remains limited and inconclusive on any widespread need for booster doses following a primary vaccination series. The WHO is carefully monitoring the situation and will continue to work closely with countries to obtain the data required for policy recommendations.

For more information, please see the WHO's interim guidance: [Interim statement on COVID-19 vaccine booster doses \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/interim-guidance/2021/05/interim-statement-on-covid-19-vaccine-booster-doses)

### **30. CAN I RETURN TO LIFE AS NORMAL AFTER I'VE BEEN VACCINATED?**

For the time being, even after receiving the vaccine, you should continue to stay vigilant (wear a mask, wash your hands and maintain physical distancing) until the vast majority of the population is immune.

We are still awaiting scientific confirmation that a vaccinated person, when exposed to the virus, might continue to spread it to others when asymptomatic.

Please note that vaccines continue to protect the person who receives the vaccine.

### **31. IF I HAVE ALREADY HAD COVID-19 AND RECOVERED, DO I STILL NEED TO GET A COVID-19 VACCINE?**

Yes. The COVID-19 vaccination should be offered to you regardless of whether you have already had the COVID-19 infection previously. The protection from a vaccination appears to provide more effective protection.

However, those who are currently infected with COVID-19 should postpone vaccination until after their illness has run its course and after they have met their health authorities' criteria to discontinue isolation.

Additionally, current evidence suggests that re-infection with the virus that causes COVID-19 is uncommon in the 90 days after initial infection. Therefore, people with a recent infection may delay vaccination until the end of that 90-day period if desired.

### **32. AFTER I AM VACCINATED, HOW LONG WILL VACCINE IMMUNITY LAST?**

Researchers do not yet know yet how long immunity lasts after vaccination. That is why continuation of public health preventive practices, e.g. wearing a mask, washing your hands regularly and physical distancing, will still be important for some time to come.



### 33. WHY SHOULD A VACCINE BE NEEDED IF WE HAVE OTHER PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES LIKE PHYSICAL DISTANCING AND WEARING MASKS, TO PREVENT COVID-19 FROM SPREADING?

Stopping a pandemic requires using all tools available, including:

- Acquiring immunity against COVID-19, naturally (by contracting the illness) or through vaccination.
- Avoiding contracting and spreading COVID-19 by respecting preventive measures like covering your mouth and nose with a mask and staying at least 6 feet (or depending on local health authorities' recommendations) away from others.
- Wearing of masks when you are in crowded settings, where you cannot be at least 6 feet from others and in rooms with poor or unknown ventilation.

Together, being vaccinated against COVID-19 along with following WHO's and other public health recommendations will offer the best protection from COVID-19 for yourself and those around you.

### 34. IF I GET A COVID-19 VACCINE, WILL IT CAUSE A FALSE POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 DIAGNOSTIC TESTING (I.E. PCR OR ANTIGEN TESTS)?

Receiving the COVID-19 vaccine will **not cause** a positive PCR or antigen laboratory test result since these specific tests check for active disease and not whether an individual is immune or not.

However, it should be noted that the antibody test (or "serology test") may be positive in someone who has been vaccinated, since that is a specific test that measures COVID-19 immunity in an individual.

### 35. CAN I GET THE COVID-19 VACCINATION IF I AM PREGNANT OR BREASTFEEDING?

Vaccination can be offered to breastfeeding women if they are part of a group prioritized for vaccination. WHO does not recommend discontinuation of breastfeeding after vaccination.

While pregnancy puts women at higher risk of severe COVID-19, very little data are available to assess vaccine safety in pregnancy.

Pregnant women may receive the vaccine if the benefit of vaccinating a pregnant woman outweighs the potential vaccine risks. For this reason, pregnant women at high risk of exposure to SARS-CoV-2 (e.g. health workers) or who have comorbidities which add to their risk of severe disease, may be vaccinated in consultation with their health care provider. Source: [WHO](#).

### 36. IS THE UN ABLE TO PROCURE ME A SPECIFIC VACCINATION UPON REQUEST?



No. The vaccination process is described in other questions. The United Nations will only be administering vaccines that it has procured, and which are available.

### **37. ARE THE CURRENT VACCINES STILL EFFECTIVE AGAINST COVID-19 VARIANTS?**

While this is an evolving area at this time WHO recommends vaccination even in areas with circulating variants, as such vaccines remain effective against severe disease and deaths. Depending on the variants and vaccine type vaccine efficacy might be reduced, however, further study is ongoing.

#### **ABOUT UN SYSTEM-WIDE VACCINATION PROGRAMME COORDINATION**

### **38. HOW IS THE UN SYSTEM-WIDE COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME COORDINATED?**

The UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme is coordinated by a recently established Vaccine Deployment Working Group, led by the Department of Operational Support at the UN Headquarters in New York. This Working Group incorporates representatives from several UN system entities, leveraging expertise from across the UN System. A Field Communications Working Group coordinates all communication related to the vaccine deployment effort.

### **39. WHAT IS THE GLOBAL VACCINE DEPLOYMENT SUPPORT TEAM (“GVDST”)?**

Set up by the Vaccine Deployment Working Group, the GVDST provides hands-on support to the UN country teams and field missions as they carry out the vaccination effort on the ground, from the development of local vaccination plans to the execution phase. GVDST is comprised of representative from the UN Medical Directors (UNMD) network, the Field Communications Working Group as well as DOS IT and logistics teams and are dedicated to assisting in addressing gaps and obstacles identified in specific country vaccination plans. Further information and guidance can be accessed [here](#).

### **40. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF LOCAL VACCINE DEPLOYMENT COORDINATORS (LVDC)?**

Local Vaccine Deployment Coordinators are responsible for the roll-out of the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme to eligible recipients within their respective UN country teams and field missions, with guidance and support provided by the Global Vaccine Deployment Support Team at all stages of the program. Local Vaccine Deployment Coordinators work in collaboration with stakeholders in country to ensure that population data is accurate, eligible individuals register for vaccination, doses are received, handled and transported safely in country, vaccine administration arrangements are in place, etc. Further information and guidance can be accessed [here](#).

See latest list of LVDCs per duty station [here](#).



## 41. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF UN COUNTRY TEAMS AND UN FIELD MISSIONS IN THE UN SYSTEM-WIDE COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME?

Local Vaccine Deployment (LVD) plans are developed at country level with guidance from the Global Vaccine Deployment Support Team. Generally, Local Vaccine Deployment Coordinators, nominated by senior leadership, will assemble a Local Vaccine Deployment team in charge of developing country specific COVID-19 vaccine deployment plans TO IMPLEMENT THE un System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme in that location. The LVD plans are developed in coordination with other UN country team partners. UN system organizations' human resources, legal offices, communications experts as well as medical, logistics, maintenance and security personnel should all be consulted and participate in the formulation of the plan and its subsequent implementation. Such plans should consider a number of criteria, including the size of the population eligible for the vaccine under the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme, the number of duty stations in country as well as the access to local health care services.

In countries with integrated missions, the local vaccine deployment coordinators lead teams of focal points from the different stakeholders (UNCT, Missions, AFPs) to put together a vaccination program that addresses the requirements of both the civilian and uniformed personnel.

The Global Vaccine Deployment Support Team has provided a range of resources for UN Country Teams and Field Missions to assist them in this process. These resources include guidelines, SOPs and checklists that should be used to assess the operational readiness of UNCT and UN Missions to receive and administer the COVID-19 vaccine to UN Personnel. All resources can be accessed [here](#).

## 42. IF A COUNTRY TEAM/ FIELD MISSION IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE UN SYSTEM-WIDE COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME, DOES IT REQUIRE A FORMAL LOCAL VACCINE DEPLOYMENT TEAM?

The Local Vaccine Deployment Coordinator should be identified but the formation of an entire team is not necessary unless and until a plan needs to be developed. The Local Vaccine Deployment Coordinator should keep track of vaccinations conducted through national programmes and ensure that issues are flagged, and concerns addressed.

## 43. WHERE CAN COUNTRY TEAMS OBTAIN GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT FOR THEIR COUNTRY LEVEL COMMUNICATIONS EFFORTS?

The Field Communications Working Group, covering MEDEVAC, First Line of Defense (FLOD) and Vaccines, meets weekly and ensures that all guidance and information relevant to the UN System-Wide COVID-19 Vaccination Effort is clearly and consistently communicated to all personnel and related audiences across the system. It also works to ensure that all such communications are a cohesive part of the overarching UN COVID-19 Communications Strategy. The working group maintains a repository of content that Country Teams and UN Field Missions can access for their specific comms needs. For further



information, please contact: [covidvaccines@un.org](mailto:covidvaccines@un.org)

#### 44. HOW ARE SHIPMENTS OF VACCINES UNDER THE UN SYSTEM-WIDE COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME BEING CENTRALLY COORDINATED?

The Global Vaccine Deployment Support team is planning to ship the first doses of vaccines available to those duty stations that are ready to receive vaccines, following the priority list defined by the UN Medical Directors (UNMD) country priority tool. The first shipments will include first doses for as many high-risk individuals as possible across priority countries. While going down the list of priority countries, certain UN duty stations may be placed on “hold” for a number of reasons, such as the confirmed access to vaccine through the national program, the effort to synchronize with the COVAX deployment, the lack of authorization from the host nation to import vaccine and other reasons.

#### 45. HOW ARE PERSONNEL OF INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS ADMINISTERED UNDER THE UN SYSTEM-WIDE COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME?

For specific guidance related to INGOs, kindly see [UN System-Wide covid-19 Vaccination Programme inclusion of INGO personnel through sponsorship arrangements with UN Organizations](#).

#### 43. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE UN SYSTEM-WIDE COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME REGISTRATION PLATFORM?

The Registration Platform provides a one-stop solution for the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme to review eligibility, schedule COVID-19 vaccinations and administer them. Vaccination within the framework of the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme is not possible without being registered in the Registration Platform.

#### 44. HOW DOES THE REGISTRATION PLATFORM WORK?

The Registration Platform is based on commercial software, used by many governments and organizations to manage the administration of vaccine. The Registration Platform has been adjusted to our organization’s needs by IT experts that are part of the UN Global Vaccine Deployment Support Team. They work with individual country teams to prepare the Registration Platform for launch locally. The local vaccine deployment teams are trained to manage the data in the Registration Platform and provide guidance and instructions to the personnel in their duty station. Basic information of all those eligible under the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme is loaded into the Registration Platform. Based on the prioritization guidelines of the duty station, registration links are then generated and distributed to personal (via email or sms) for the completion of their registration within the Registration Platform. Local Registrars, verify all information to ensure the individual is eligible and whether they are included in the current group of prioritized individuals such as front line workers and those most at risk. Once that is done, individuals opting to be vaccinated are given instructions and they need to schedule their vaccine appointments within the Registration Platform. Once the second dose is administered, certificates can be accessed via the Registration Platform as proof of vaccination.



## 45. HOW DO I ACCESS THE REGISTRATION PLATFORM?

There are only two ways in which you can register on the Registration Platform:

1. If your data was preloaded by your sponsoring organization, you will receive an independent link by email to review your information and complete your registration; or
2. You will be notified by the Local Vaccination Deployment Team/ Coordinator when self-registration is open for your country/duty station & a link will be provided to you.

## 46. HOW WILL I KNOW THAT MY REGISTRATION WAS SUCCESSFUL?

After you fill out all the required fields in the registration pages and save your data, your screen will display the message “Your profile was successfully created”. This confirms that your registration is complete. Your information and eligibility will then be reviewed by the administration of the local UN vaccination clinic. Upon confirmation of eligibility, you will receive an e-mail and/or text notification to confirm your scheduled appointment. Appointments are scheduled based on vaccine availability.

## 47. WILL UN DEPENDENTS BE ABLE TO REGISTER THROUGH THE REGISTRATION PLATFORM?

UN personnel will be informed when registration opens in different duty stations and they will be able to initiate the registration of their eligible dependents. More information will be shared directly with eligible registrants. This can only be done if the UN System-Wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme is running in the country in which the dependents reside. Local Vaccine Deployment Coordinators in each duty station will share the link to the Registration Platform when the registration for that specific duty station opens.

## 48. I HAVE REGISTERED MY DEPENDENTS THAT LIVE IN ANOTHER COUNTRY IN WHICH THE UN SYSTEM-WIDE COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME IS RUNNING. WILL THEY GET A NOTIFICATION INSTANTLY?

Your dependents, residing in a different country in which the UN System-Wide COVID-19 vaccination Programme is being rolled out – will get a notification through the UN country office of the country in which they reside. This may not happen instantly, as the registration process may not yet be open, or they may not yet be eligible to receive the vaccine – in line with the prioritization process. The moment registration opens for their particular population segment, they will receive a notification.

## 49. IF I REGISTER AND GET A VACCINATION, WHERE WILL MY INFORMATION GO? WILL IT BE KEPT SAFE?

Your personal and health care information will be kept confidential and will not be shared beyond the UN personnel responsible for managing the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. Personal identifying information such as your name, contact information and address will be treated as confidential. Your medical data will be treated as confidential medical records and will be accessed by medical personnel only. The data will be hosted by a third-party contractor, engaged by the United Nations, and is required under its





contractual obligations to maintain the data as confidential.

## 50. HOW CAN I GET HELP IF I HAVE DIFFICULTIES NAVIGATING THE REGISTRATION PLATFORM?

Please click the “? Help & Answers” link in the top-right corner of the page for support.

## 51. HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN I HAVE BEEN SCHEDULED TO RECEIVE THE VACCINATION?

The local UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme clinic / vaccine scheduler will set up your appointment based on vaccine availability. You will receive a notification by text and/or email with the appointed date and time. The options to accept or decline the appointment will be provided to you.

## 52. HOW DO I UPDATE MY PROFILE?

You can update your profile by logging into the Registration Platform and clicking on the ‘Edit’ link in your Profile page as show below. Please remember to save your changes!

## 53. I GOT THE REGISTRATION LINK BUT I HAVE ALREADY BEEN VACCINATED ELSEWHERE/ DO NOT WANT TO BE VACCINATED. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

In the situation where you are already fully vaccinated or you do not want to be vaccinated kindly let us know by initiating the registration process and indicating that you do not wish to receive the vaccine as part of the UN System-Wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme. This will help us tremendously with the planning for future shipments.

## 54. WILL I RECEIVE A CERTIFICATE OF VACCINATION?

Everyone vaccinated through the UN System-wide COVID-19 Vaccination Programme will receive a certificate. You will be able to access your certificate through the Registration Portal.

## 55. CAN I RECEIVE A VACCINE WITHOUT REGISTERING ON THE REGISTRATION PORTAL?

No. Anyone who has not registered through the Registration Platform will not receive the vaccine.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

[The UN Intranet-iSeek: COVID-19 Response page](#)

[UN COVID-19 Response page](#)

[World Health Organization](#)

[COVAX Explained](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(USA\)](#)

[UNICEF COVAX Information Centre](#)

[WHO SAGE Roadmap For Prioritizing Uses Of COVID-19 Vaccines](#)

### REFERENCES:



[https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub/q-a-detail/coronavirus-disease-\(covid-19\)-vaccines](https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/question-and-answers-hub/q-a-detail/coronavirus-disease-(covid-19)-vaccines)  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html>  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/expect/after.html>  
[https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/coronavirus\\_unmdstatementcovidvaccine.pdf](https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/coronavirus_unmdstatementcovidvaccine.pdf)

**CONTACT FOR STAFF**

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