

Influenza and COVID-19 Immunization Programs 2025-2026 Program Overview & Frequently Asked Questions

The official start date of the Ministry of Health 2025-2026 Saskatchewan Influenza Immunization Program and COVID-19 Immunization Program is **October 14, 2025**.

The soft-start date for both programs in pharmacies is **October 6, 2025**. The focus of the soft-start is to vaccinate individuals outlined in the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/vaccines-immunization/national-advisory-committee-immunization-statement-seasonal-influenza-vaccines-2025-2026.html#1>) (e.g. 65 year of age and older, residents of congregate living/personal care homes and immunocompromised patients, etc.). **The soft-start provided by pharmacies is not to be publicized.**

Billing information and procedures can be found in Table 1 and Appendix I of both the Drug Plan and Extended Benefits Branch Influenza Immunization Policy (IIP) and the COVID-19 Immunization Policy (CIP) which will be posted on the Saskatchewan Drug Plan Formulary website (<https://formulary.drugplan.ehealthsask.ca/InfluenzaImmunizationProgram>)

For more information, including a recorded video outlining the policies, key points and what is new regarding the IIP and CIP please visit the medSask Respiratory Virus Season Webpage (<https://medsask.usask.ca/respiratory-illness-season>).

Influenza and COVID-19 Vaccine Products in Pharmacies

Information regarding influenza and COVID-19 vaccine products and ordering information has been communicated in Drug Plan Extended Bulletin #943 - Influenza and COVID-19 Immunization Distribution. This bulletin can also be found on the Saskatchewan Drug Plan Formulary website (<https://formulary.drugplan.ehealthsask.ca/InfluenzaImmunizationProgram>).

MODERNA SPIKEVAX® is the only COVID-19 vaccine that has been allocated to pharmacies this year.

PFIZER COMIRNATY® vaccine is not available for order by community pharmacies. Patients clinically requiring this vaccine should be directed to Public Health.

New for 2025-2026

For DPEBB inventory tracking purposes, pharmacies **must alert** the DPEBB if publicly funded influenza or COVID-19 vaccine is transferred **between pharmacies (this includes transfers to and from satellite pharmacies) or from public health offices to pharmacies**. Pharmacies must complete the *Transferring Provincially Funded Influenza or COVID-19 Vaccine Form* (<https://formulary.drugplan.ehealthsask.ca/InfluenzaImmunizationProgram>) and email the form to dpebimmunizations@health.gov.sk.ca **prior** to transferring any vaccine. Public Health to Pharmacy transfers must be arranged and approved by the Ministry **before** stock is moved.

The Vaccine Distribution Tracking System will not be used to track COVID-19 vaccines for this upcoming season.

Who To Contact

**REGISTRATION OF A PHARMACY FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE PROGRAM;
INFLUENZA and COVID-19 VACCINE SUPPLY; and
DAILY/WEEKLY ORDER LIMITS (and requests exceeding daily or weekly limits for an immunization clinic):**

- Contact the DPEBB at dpebimmunizations@health.gov.sk.ca.

BILLING QUESTIONS OR ISSUES:

- Contact the DPEBB at 306-787-3317 (Regina) or 1-800-667-7581.

ORDERING AND SHIPPING OF PUBLICLY FUNDED INFLUENZA and COVID-19 VACCINE:

Contact the appropriate wholesaler order desk:

- McKesson Canada Order Desk: 1-800-667-9299.
- Kohl & Frisch Ltd. Order Desk: 1-800-821-8777.
- Shoppers Drug Mart/Loblaw Pharmacies (Matrix) should order publicly funded influenza and COVID-19 vaccine through the usual processes using their pharmacy order management system.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What are the dates for the Ministry of Health 2025-2026 Saskatchewan Influenza Immunization Program and COVID-19 Immunization Program?

- The Ministry's 2025-2026 programs are scheduled to officially begin on October 14, 2025 and end on March 31, 2026.
- Children under the age of nine receiving their first influenza immunization may receive their second dose no later than April 30, 2026.
- As part of the soft-start to the programs and pending no shipping delays, authorized immunizers are permitted to begin administration of the publicly funded FLUAD® ENHANCED-Dose, FLUVIRAL® and MODERNA SPIKEVAX® on October 6, 2025.

2. Do pharmacists need to obtain consent from individuals to administer an influenza or COVID-19 vaccine?

- Yes, as all immunizations in the Province of Saskatchewan are voluntary, pharmacists are required to obtain informed written or verbal consent before immunization with a publicly funded or privately purchased vaccine.
- Pharmacists must follow the requirements for obtaining and documenting consent according to the *Policies, Standards and Guidelines for Pharmacists in the Administration of Drugs by Injection and Other Routes, August 2015* of the Saskatchewan College of Pharmacy Professionals (SCPP) at <https://saskpharm.ca/site/profprac/adminofdrugs?nav=sidebar>.
- All documentation for verbal consent **MUST** clearly indicate that the consent was obtained verbally.
- The Ministry of Health Influenza Vaccine Fact Sheet 2025-26 and/or The Ministry of Health COVID-19 Fact Sheet 2025-2026 is to be made available for each individual to obtain informed consent.

3. Where can pharmacists get copies of the client-applicable Influenza and COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheets?

- The Ministry of Health Seasonal Influenza Vaccine Fact Sheet 2025-2026 and The Ministry of Health COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet 2025-2026 will be available for downloading free of charge at <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/residents/health/accessing-health-care-services/immunization-services/immunization-forms-and-fact-sheets>.

4. Where can pharmacists get the Ministry wallet cards to provide to individuals as proof of immunization?

- Wallet cards for proof of immunization are no longer available for purchase or download. Patients should be directed to their MySaskHealthRecord for proof of immunization.

5. Can authorized immunizers administer the vaccine to the whole family, if a family has children younger than five years of age?

- The SIIP permits authorized pharmacy immunizers to administer the influenza and COVID-19 vaccine to residents of Saskatchewan who are **five years of age and older**.
- A child younger than five years old must be referred to local Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) Public Health for administration of the influenza and COVID-19 vaccine.

6. Can authorized immunizers administer the publicly funded influenza and COVID-19 vaccine in locations other than pharmacies?

- Authorized immunizers may administer publicly funded influenza and COVID-19 vaccine within the physical space of licensed pharmacy or outside of the pharmacy, as defined in *Appendix II: Definition of Alternate Location, Congregate Living Setting, Licensed Personal Care Home (PCH) and Home Visit for Publicly Funded Vaccine* in the Influenza Immunization Program (IIP) and COVID-19 Immunization Program (CIP) policy documents.

Note: Pharmacies are **not authorized** to administer publicly funded vaccine at businesses and other non-public access locations. Pharmacies **are authorized** to support socially vulnerable populations (e.g., homeless shelters, foodbanks).

Pharmacies are reminded that off-site delivery of influenza and COVID-19 vaccine in Personal Care Homes or during home visits should be communicated to and coordinated with local public health offices to prevent possible duplication of services. Pharmacies are encouraged to also communicate with local public health offices regarding off-site clinics to avoid duplication.

7. Do I need to register an “Alternate Location” with the DPEBB for individuals to receive publicly funded influenza and/or COVID-19 vaccine?

- Although pharmacies aren’t required to register alternate location clinics with the DPEBB, they should make every effort to ensure a clinic date has not already been established by public health to avoid duplication of services. It is recommended to reference <http://4flu.ca/> to help identify active public health clinics in your area.

8. What are the reporting requirements if an individual experiences an adverse event following immunization (AEFI)?

- All AEFIs must be reported immediately using the form on the Health Canada website (https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/immunization/reporting-adverse-events-following-immunization/aeFI_form.pdf) and submitted to:
 - Publicly Funded Vaccine: To your local SHA Public Health as outline in the SIIP.
 - Privately Purchased Vaccine: Send directly to Health Canada.
- medSask created a supportive document to assist pharmacists filling out an AEFI, which can be found at <https://medsask.usask.ca/sites/medsask/files/2023-02/aeFI-quick-sheet.pdf>.

9. What are the reporting requirements if there is a cold chain break?

- All cold chain breaks for publicly funded vaccines must be reported **immediately** upon discovery to Population Health Branch, Saskatchewan Ministry of Health, as set out in the SIIP (Page 11 and Appendix 3 and 4).
- The *Cold Chain Break Report Form* is available at the following link: <https://www.ehealthsask.ca/services/resources/Resources/Saskatchewan%20Influenza%20Immunization%20Policy.pdf> (Appendix 3).
- Information to assist pharmacists in completing the form is included in Appendix 4 in the SIIP.

- Pharmacies should not assume product involved in a cold chain break is unusable. Product involved in a cold chain break must be returned to proper storage requirements, labelled and quarantined from other stock until direction is given by Population Health Branch. Do not use any product involved in a cold chain break until advised by Population Health Branch.

10. What are the reporting requirements for publicly funded vaccine wastage?

- All wasted influenza vaccine doses, including unused doses at the end of the season, must be **reported immediately** to the Population Health Branch, Saskatchewan Ministry of Health, as set out in the SIIP (Page 12 and Appendix 5).
- The *Product Wastage Report* form is available at the following link:
<https://www.ehealthsask.ca/services/resources/Resources/Saskatchewan%20Influenza%20Immunization%20Policy.pdf> (Appendix 5).

11. What should be done if there is a problem with an influenza vaccine vial or pre-filled syringe?

- Problems with vaccine vials or pre-filled syringes must be reported to the Ministry of Health immediately using the *Vaccine Supply Problem Report* form available at the following link:
<https://www.ehealthsask.ca/services/resources/Resources/Saskatchewan%20Influenza%20Immunization%20Policy.pdf> (Appendix 6).

12. Can a pharmacy privately purchase influenza or COVID-19 vaccine and charge the individual if they are from out-of-province?

- A pharmacy is not permitted to use publicly funded influenza or COVID-19 vaccine to immunize out-of-province individuals. Pharmacists **must** refer out-of-province individuals requesting influenza or COVID-19 immunization to their local SHA Public Health Office.
- A pharmacy may purchase and charge an out-of-province individual for a non-publicly funded influenza vaccine if the individual chooses. The patient must be informed of any SHA public health no-charge options prior to offering non-publicly funded vaccine.
- There is no privately purchased COVID-19 vaccine available for pharmacies to purchase.
- Pharmacies cannot submit a claim for an IIF or CIF to the DPEBB for non-publicly funded influenza vaccine.

13. Can pharmacies provide incentives or rewards under customer loyalty programs when providing publicly funded influenza or COVID-19 vaccine?

- **No incentives shall be provided** by the Proprietor, or an agent on behalf of the Proprietor, to any other person in relation to the provision of publicly funded influenza immunization. *“Incentives” means any money, gifts, donations to a charity, rebates, refunds, customer loyalty programs, points, coupons, discounts, goods and/or rewards which can be redeemed for a gift or other benefit.*

14. Can our pharmacy advertise the “soft start” of the Influenza Immunization Program and/or COVID-19 Immunization Program to patrons?

- It is not permitted to publicize the soft start. Any advertising of publicly funded influenza and COVID-19 vaccine must include the official start date of the programs.

15. When can we open our patient booking system either in person, over the phone or online for immunization appointments?

- Pharmacies may begin accepting appointments into their patient booking systems prior to the official program start date, provided that they **do not**:
 - Offer booked appointments for immunization prior to October 14, 2025 or,
 - Advertise the soft-start of the immunization programs.

- 16. Children between the ages of five and eight years require a second dose of influenza vaccine (minimum of four weeks [28 days] after their first dose) if they have not received the influenza vaccine before. How does a pharmacy submit a claim for capture of the vaccine product and a claim for payment of the IIF if that child turns nine years old before they receive the second required dose?**
- The child would not be eligible to receive the second dose if they have turned nine years old.
- 17. How does a pharmacy submit a claim for capture for a vaccine product if a patient has inadvertently received more than one dose of publicly funded COVID-19 or influenza vaccine (or more than two influenza doses in children five to eight years of age) in a season?**
- If a patient has inadvertently received an additional dose they were not eligible to receive, the pharmacist should submit the immunization event for capture using usual processes. The pharmacy would not be eligible to receive the IIF or CIF.
 - The pharmacist must report the medication error to dpebimmunizations@health.gov.sk.ca and COMPASS immediately.
- 18. How does a pharmacy order publicly funded influenza or COVID-19 vaccine for licensed personal care home (PCH) residents?**
- Pharmacies may order publicly funded influenza or COVID-19 vaccine for PCH residents, as per the usual ordering process from their wholesaler.
 - Pharmacies were asked to notify DPEBB within the initial registration survey if they plan to offer immunization services to a PCH. The DPEBB will notify Population Health on the behalf of these pharmacies. If your pharmacy did not indicate your intent to provide immunization services to a PCH on the initial survey, please communicate with your local public health office to avoid duplication of services.
 - Pharmacies are not required to register individual PCH residents. However, when requested pharmacies are to provide the DPEBB with a list of PCH residents that received publicly funded influenza or COVID-19 vaccine within two business days.
- 19. Can I co-administer influenza vaccine with COVID-19 vaccine?**
- Influenza vaccine may be administered during the same appointment as other vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccine.
 - Influenza vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine must be administered in separate syringes and different administration sites.
- 20. I am having a clinic and need more than the maximum daily/weekly allocation. How can I get more vaccine?**
- You may order the maximum allocations every day/week in advance to reach your expected demand for a clinic.
 - If you require more than the maximum allocations on short notice, please email dpebimmunizations@health.gov.sk.ca for support.
- 21. Who is eligible to receive FLUAD® Enhanced-Dose vaccine?**
- All residents (i.e., in the community, congregate living and personal care homes) age 65 and older with a valid Saskatchewan Health Services Card are eligible to receive the publicly funded FLUAD® Enhanced-Dose vaccine.
 - If a patient has a true contraindication to FLUAD® Enhanced-Dose they can be referred to public health to receive FLUZONE® High-Dose.
- 22. A patient of ours who is age 65, does NOT want FLUAD Enhanced-Dose®. Is it okay to administer FLUVIRAL®?**
- Yes, FLUVIRAL® is indicated for individuals 6 months of age and older.
- 23. What is the eligibility criteria for COVID-19 immunization for 2025-2026?**
- Any Saskatchewan resident over the age of 5 with a valid health services number may receive a COVID-19 immunization from a pharmacist.