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Safe Actions For Employee Returns



COVID-19 Vaccine Federal Guidance for Occupations

Introduction:

In [a memo](#) on Dec. 16, 2020, the U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) issued guidance identifying essential critical infrastructure workers in various sectors.

The CISA guidance was used by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, which [issued recommendations](#) for when individuals should be vaccinated. **It is important to note these are just recommendations, and employers need to consult with state and local officials and healthcare providers to understand where their essential employees may fit into state and local vaccination rollout plans.**

The CDC has also issued [direction](#) to map industries and occupations using standardized industry codes to the vaccine recommendations below.

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The CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends the following phasing of vaccinations:

Phase 1a: Healthcare personnel and long-term care facility residents

Phase 1b: “Front line essential workers” and persons age 75 or greater. **The CDC recommendations define “frontline essential workers” as:**

- First responders (e.g., firefighters and police officers)
- Corrections officers
- Food and agricultural workers
- U.S. Postal Service workers
- Manufacturing workers
- Grocery store workers
- Public transit workers
- Those who work in the education sector (teachers and support staff members) as well as child care workers¹

If you have questions on this definition of “frontline essential workers,” please consult the [CDC guidance document](#). If your organization includes employees listed in phase 1a or phase 1b, consult with your healthcare provider and local/state officials to find out when and how your employees can be vaccinated.

Phase 1c: Persons age 65-74; persons age 16-64 with high-risk medical conditions; and **all “essential workers” not recommended for vaccination in phase 1b.**²

As indicated above, all essential workers (defined by the CISA guidance) are recommended to be vaccinated as part of phase 1c. If you are unsure if your employees are considered “essential,” **NSC recommends you consult the [CISA guidance memo](#)**, which is broken down by industry. Below are examples from the CISA memo of occupational safety and health essential workers who are listed for vaccination in phase 1c (this is a small sampling; if you do not see your employees listed below it is still recommended that you consult the CISA guidance memo):

- **Public Health/Healthcare Workplace safety workers**,³ including those who focus on implementing environmental controls, sanitary and infection control interventions, healthcare facility safety and emergency preparedness planning, engineered work practices, and developing guidance and protocols for appropriate PPE to prevent COVID-19 disease transmission.⁴
- **Workers in the electricity industry, including those supporting safety.**⁵
- **Transportation safety inspectors**, including hazardous material inspectors and accident investigator inspectors.⁶

¹ https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/wr/pdfs/mm695152e2-H.pdf?ACSTrackingID=USCDC_921-DM45302&ACSTrackingLabel=MMWR%20Early%20Release%20-%20Vol.%2069%2C%20December%2022%2C%202020&deliveryName=USCDC_921-DM45302, p. 2

² “Frontline essential workers” and “essential workers” are defined differently for purposes of the CDC vaccination guidance.

³ https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/ECIW_4.0_Guidance_on_Essential_Critical_Infrastructure_Workers_Final3_508_0.pdf, p. 7

⁴ https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/ECIW_4.0_Guidance_on_Essential_Critical_Infrastructure_Workers_Final3_508_0.pdf, p.9

⁵ https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/ECIW_4.0_Guidance_on_Essential_Critical_Infrastructure_Workers_Final3_508_0.pdf, p.13

⁶ https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/ECIW_4.0_Guidance_on_Essential_Critical_Infrastructure_Workers_Final3_508_0.pdf, p.17

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- **Engineers performing or supporting safety inspections.**⁷
- **Workers supporting the operations of commercial buildings that are critical to safety, security and the continuance of essential activities, such as on-site property managers, building engineers, security staff, fire safety directors, janitorial personnel and service technicians (e.g., mechanical, HVAC, plumbers, electricians and elevator).**⁸

Phase 2: All other persons aged 16 and over not already recommended for vaccination in Phases 1a, 1b or 1c.

⁷https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/ECIW_4.0_Guidance_on_Essential_Critical_Infrastructure_Workers_Final3_508_0.pdf, p.20

⁸https://www.cisa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/ECIW_4.0_Guidance_on_Essential_Critical_Infrastructure_Workers_Final3_508_0.pdf, p.23