



Jeffrey C. Riley  
Commissioner  
Massachusetts Department of  
Elementary and Secondary Education



Monica Bharel, MD, MPH  
Commissioner  
Massachusetts Department of Public Health

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Superintendents, Charter School Leaders, Assistant Superintendents,  
Collaborative Leaders, Leaders of Approved Special Education Schools  
**FROM:** Jeffrey C. Riley, Commissioner, Department of Elementary and Secondary  
Education  
Monica Bharel, Commissioner, Department of Public Health  
**SUBJECT:** COVID Vaccine approved for ages 12 and above  
**DATE:** May 18, 2021

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We are writing to ask for your assistance in promoting COVID vaccination for your school community.

As of Wednesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, the Pfizer COVID vaccine has been approved for use by young people, including ages 12 and above.

The COVID vaccine has been shown to be safe and effective and we urge parents to get their children vaccinated. It is also important to remember that these vaccines are voluntary.

Schools may use the employer vaccination program to host a free onsite clinic for staff and students if 35 or more individuals are confirmed to participate. Schools may also request a block of appointments at a Mass vaccination site for staff and students. Further information is available on the webpage here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-employer-vaccination-program>.

Hundreds of vaccination sites are available across the state and many of these now accept walk-in appointments, including the mass vaccination sites and CVS and Walgreens pharmacies. As a reminder, the COVID vaccine is free for all, and no ID or insurance is needed to obtain the vaccine. More information on these sites, as well as safety information, and helpful Q&As are all available at [www.mass.gov/covidvaccine](http://www.mass.gov/covidvaccine).

We encourage you to use your social media, send newsletters to parents, and put-up posters to encourage vaccination. Getting vaccinated is the best way to protect yourself and your loved ones and is the only way we can end the pandemic. Vaccines are free. Materials and graphics in multiple languages can be downloaded [here](#).

We also continue to urge all school personnel to get vaccinated to protect themselves, their families, and their school community. We appreciate your assistance to promote COVID vaccination to your school communities.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Riley, Commissioner

Monica Bharel, MD, MPH, Commissioner