

NEWS BRIEF

Provided by: National Insurance Services

CDC Recommends Pfizer Booster Shots for Vulnerable Populations, Individuals in High-risk Settings

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently issued a [statement](#) recommending a distribution plan for booster shots of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. The agency recommends a booster dose for specific vulnerable populations and those in high-risk occupational and institutional settings.

This guidance comes as CDC Director Rochelle P. Walensky endorsed the agency's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendation to offer booster shots to vulnerable populations. Notably, Walensky's broader recommendation to also include doses for those in high-risk settings overturned the ACIP's original recommendation not to include these groups. This is widely considered an unusual course of action. However, this current CDC recommendation aligns with the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) [amended](#) emergency use authorization, issued just days prior to the CDC's statement.

Who Is Eligible for a Booster Shot?

The CDC recommends the following populations **should** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least six months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series:

- People 65 years and older and residents in long-term care settings
- People aged 50-64 years with underlying medical conditions

Additionally, the CDC recommends the following populations **may** receive a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine at least six months after their Pfizer-BioNTech primary series, based on individual benefits and risks:

- People aged 18-49 years with underlying medical conditions
- People aged 18-64 years who are at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of occupational or institutional settings

The CDC did not explicitly state what groups may be at increased risk because of occupational or institutional settings, but the FDA's recent authorization of the booster provided examples such as health care workers; teachers and day care staff; grocery workers; and those in homeless shelters or prisons.

What's Next?

This action means that booster doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine will be available in the coming days for eligible individuals.

While this recommendation does not apply to Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines, federal health officials will urgently pursue recommendations for these vaccines as soon as the appropriate data is available, according to the statement.

Individuals should monitor updates from local health officials for information on vaccine distribution. To learn more about booster eligibility, contact your health care provider.

