

## **FACT SHEET: Biden Administration Announces Update on Operational Planning for COVID-19 Vaccinations for Kids Ages 5-11**

*Administration to Make Vaccination Convenient, Easily Accessible, and Free for Kids Ages 5-11 if Authorized by the FDA and CDC*

Since taking office, President Biden has mobilized a whole-of-government effort to get Americans vaccinated and end the pandemic. Today, 2 in 3 eligible individuals – 189 million Americans – are fully vaccinated. That’s an increase from approximately 2 million reported when the President took office. The potential authorization of the first COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5-11, which is currently under consideration by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), would be another major milestone in our efforts to build on this historic progress and protect even more Americans.

In anticipation of the FDA’s independent advisory committee meeting on October 26 and the CDC’s independent advisory committee meeting on November 2-3, today the Biden Administration is announcing a plan to ensure that, if a vaccine is authorized for children ages 5-11, it is quickly distributed and made conveniently and equitably available to families across the country. The start of a vaccination program for children ages 5-11 will depend on the independent FDA and CDC process and timeline, but our planning efforts mean that we will be ready to begin getting shots in arms in the days following a final CDC recommendation. These steps will be critical in ensuring that we are staying ahead of the virus by keeping kids and families safe, especially those at highest risk.

Millions of adolescents ages 12-17 have been safely vaccinated, and we know vaccines work. Fully vaccinated individuals are 10 times less likely to be hospitalized with COVID-19 and have a high degree of protection, including against the Delta variant. The consequences of a pediatric COVID-19 case can be serious and potentially last months.

As with vaccination for those 12 and older, the success of this program will rely heavily on states, Tribes, and territories to help implement a smooth rollout. A major component of the Administration’s operational planning is working closely with state and local leaders to ensure they are prepared to distribute and administer vaccines. The Administration is hosting operational readiness calls with every jurisdiction, encouraging them to help increase enrollment of pediatric providers, and will be providing resources to support them as critical partners in the outreach and public education campaign. Thanks to the American Rescue Plan, states will continue to receive unprecedented levels of federal support, including full reimbursement from the federal government for vaccination operations and outreach programs.

The Administration’s plan will mobilize a comprehensive effort across the public and private sectors to ensure that we have the supply, the sites, and the support needed to get our nation’s children vaccinated and protected against the virus.

Today, the Biden Administration is announcing the following steps:

*Securing vaccine supply for our nation’s children:* The Administration has procured enough vaccine to support vaccination for the country’s 28 million children ages 5-11 years old. If

authorized by the FDA and recommended by the CDC, the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for 5-11 year olds will be a dose and formula specifically for this age group. The vaccine will have packaging available in smaller configurations that will make it easier for physicians' offices and other smaller, community-based providers to offer the vaccine to kids and their families. Pending FDA authorization, the packaging configuration will be 10-dose vials in cartons of 10 vials each (100 doses total), delivered in a newly updated product shipper, and the vaccine can be stored for up to 10 weeks at standard refrigeration temperatures and 6 months at ultracold temperatures. And, the vaccine will come with all the ancillary supplies that providers need to serve kids, including smaller needles. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is working hand-in-hand with states to make this vaccine supply available in communities across the country as rapidly as possible.

*Standing Up Vaccination Sites in Settings That Kids and Their Parents Know and Trust:* The Administration will make vaccination accessible and conveniently located to families across the country, including vaccination clinics at doctors' offices, hospitals, pharmacies, community health centers, and school- and community-based sites. Nationwide, more than 25,000 pediatric and primary care provider sites will provide vaccinations for children, in addition to tens of thousands of other provider locations that serve children, including pharmacies, children's hospitals, and community health centers.

- *Over 25,000 Pediatricians' Offices and Other Primary Care Sites:* The Administration, in partnership with states and localities, will make vaccinations available at doctors' offices across the country — more than 25,000 pediatric offices and other primary care sites in total. Pediatricians, and other doctors, are some of the most trusted sources for families when it comes to COVID-19 vaccines for children. These providers will play a critical role in the nationwide effort to get children vaccinated. To facilitate this, the Administration is working with states to increase the number of pediatric and primary care providers enrolled to administer the vaccine and to provide the training and resources they need — including the vaccine supply in smaller package size and with easier-to-handle storage requirements highlighted above.
- *Over 100 Children's Hospitals and Health Systems Across the Country:* The Administration is launching a partnership with the Children's Hospital Association to work with over 100 children's hospital systems across the country to set up vaccination sites in November and through the end of the calendar year. Parents know and trust children's hospitals to be there for their children's medical needs, and these vaccination efforts will be no different. Pediatricians, pediatric specialists, nurses and team members will administer the vaccine to kids in trusted, family-friendly settings that serve kids every day. Participating hospitals will work to partner with community- and faith-based organizations, school districts, and other partners to conduct outreach to their local communities, and offer vaccinations at convenient hours that work for kids and their parents — such as after school, evenings, and on weekends. And, pediatric clinicians will be available to parents for questions about vaccine safety and effectiveness. Children's hospitals and health systems will be a critical part of our efforts to advance equity and ensure access for our nation's highest-risk kids, including those with obesity, diabetes, asthma, or immunosuppression.

- *Tens of Thousands of Pharmacies:* As part of the federal government's pharmacy program, tens of thousands of pharmacies across the country will offer the vaccine to their local communities. Pharmacists are a trusted source of information for parents, and local pharmacies will be a convenient, accessible option for many families. Pharmacies will offer family-friendly in-store clinics to best meet the needs of local communities. And, pharmacies will offer vaccinations at convenient hours for kids and their parents – allowing for advanced appointment scheduling and walk-ins wherever available. Pharmacy partners will launch comprehensive campaigns to reach parents and families, including texts, calls and outreach to meet local communities where they are.
- *Hundreds of School and Community-Based Clinics:* The Administration will work with states and local partners to make vaccination sites available at schools and other trusted community-based sites across the country. The Administration, through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), is providing full funding to states to support vaccination operations and outreach – including setting up sites, procuring equipment and supplies to store and administer the vaccine, providing transportation to and from vaccination sites, and communicating with the public, such as through in-person community engagement, call center support, public service announcements, and translation services. And, for those schools who need extra help, the Administration will launch a new effort to match school districts with vaccine providers who will provide on-site vaccination clinics for their students and local communities.
- *Hundreds of Community Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics:* The Administration will work with community health centers and rural health clinics across the country to provide vaccinations to the children and families they serve. Health centers and rural health clinics play a critical role in providing care for kids and their families well. Nationwide, over 3 million 5-11 year olds get their primary health care from community health centers. The Administration – working through states, the federal Health Center COVID-19 Vaccine Program, and the Rural Health Clinic COVID-19 Vaccine Program – will make vaccine supply available to health centers and rural health clinics across the country, and work hand-in-hand with providers to ensure they have the resources and support they need to serve kids and their families.

*Supporting Education and Engagement Efforts to Build Public Trust:* To ensure that parents have the information they need to make informed choices for their families, HHS will conduct a national public education campaign to reach parents and guardians with accurate and culturally-responsive information about the vaccine and the risks that COVID-19 poses to children. To achieve this, the campaign will invest heavily in trusted messengers; work with schools, state and local health departments, faith leaders, and national and community organizations to increase vaccine confidence; create forums for parents to ask questions to pediatricians; and reach out to parents directly through press and social media across channels and in multiple languages. Central to this work will be close collaboration with the major national organizations, and their local affiliates, that reach families across the country – including provider and parent organizations and other key partners from across the public and private sectors. And, the over 14,000 members of the COVID-19 Community Corps will play a critical role in mobilizing grassroots efforts to keep kids and their families safe. Additionally, while many parents will go to their own pediatrician to get their questions answered, we know some children do not have a consistent medical provider and their parents may have questions.

To ensure that every parent can get answers from trusted sources, the Surgeon General will enlist pediatricians and community leaders to talk to Americans directly via popular media and social media channels and through visits to hard-hit and high-risk communities.

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