

Executive Officer Notice: Administration of Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – Billing

Effective April 1, 2021

Part A pharmacists, registered pharmacy students, interns and pharmacy technicians who are members of the Ontario College of Pharmacists (OCP) and who have completed the required injection training and in accordance with [OCP guidance](#) can administer publicly funded injectable COVID-19 vaccines to eligible Ontarians at participating pharmacies (see Pharmacy Eligibility below).

The purpose of this Executive Officer (EO) Notice (Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – **Billing**), the EO Notice: Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – **Eligibility**, and the accompanying Questions and Answers (Qs & As) documents, are to set out the terms and conditions for a participating pharmacy’s submission of claims for payment (claims) for administering injectable COVID-19 vaccines to eligible Ontarians. Each document is a ministry policy that pharmacy operators must comply with under section 3.2 of the Health Network System (HNS) Subscription Agreement for Pharmacy Operators.

The two (2) EO Notices and the accompanying Qs & As documents are **not** intended to describe a pharmacy operator’s obligations in respect of administering injectable COVID-19 vaccines under applicable legislation, other agreements with the Province of Ontario, or policies of the OCP. Pharmacy operators with questions about their legal obligations outside of the HNS Subscription Agreement should refer to the applicable legislation, other agreement, or OCP policy as appropriate.

This EO Notice (Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – **Billing**) replaces the previous EO notice on the same topic respecting the administration of publicly funded COVID-19 vaccines in Ontario pharmacies that was effective March 22, 2021.

Pharmacy and Patient Eligibility

- Please refer to the [ministry website](#) for the most recent EO Notice entitled “Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – **Eligibility**”.

General Description

- There is no cost to eligible patients who receive the COVID-19 vaccine when administered at a pharmacy.
- For each valid claim submitted, a pharmacy will receive \$13.00 for the following services:
 - Providing the patient with details of the process and answering any questions related to the vaccination.
 - Obtaining the consent of the patient or their substitute decision-maker prior to vaccine administration
 - Administering the COVID-19 vaccine.
 - Providing the patient with proper monitoring and written vaccine information as well as after-care instructions following vaccine administration.
 - Providing the patient with a written receipt of the vaccination with the pharmacy contact information (see below for more details); a pharmacy may wish to issue an electronic receipt as well. (Note: a written receipt can be printed from COVAX_{ON}).
 - Mandatory scheduling of the second dose (if applicable)
 - Complying with any requirements to access and use the Provincial COVID-19 Vaccine Solution-COVAX_{ON} under the COVID-19 Vaccine Agreement, provided that the pharmacy has been granted access to the Solution.
- Pharmacies are eligible to access personal protective equipment (PPE) from the ministry’s dedicated supply, if needed. The ministry’s supply of PPE must **ONLY** be used to support the activity of pharmacies administering the publicly funded COVID-19 vaccine.
- Table 1 lists the publicly funded COVID-19 vaccines that are available to pharmacies, including any restrictions on administering the vaccine (e.g. age groups)¹.

¹ Inclusion of a product in the list of publicly funded vaccines available for pharmacies does not guarantee supply of the product through the participating pharmaceutical distributors.

- For clarity, where a patient meets the eligibility criteria for the vaccine² but is excluded by the restrictions for the vaccine product (see Table 1 below), the vaccine cannot be administered to the patient. If a patient does not meet the eligibility criteria for the vaccine,² the vaccine cannot be administered to the patient even if they are not excluded by the restrictions.

Table 1: Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccine

DIN or PIN	COVID-19 Vaccine Product	Dosage format	Dosing regimen	Restrictions**
02512947	COVISHIELD COVID-19 VACCINE Verity Pharmaceuticals Inc.	Intramuscular injection solution. Multi-dose vial of 10 doses (5 x 10 ¹⁰ VP / 0.5mL solution)	2 doses up to 16 weeks apart)*	Only administered to persons 55 years of age & older as per NACI ***
09857655	COVID-19 VACCINE AstraZeneca	Intramuscular injection solution. Multi-dose vial of 10 doses (5 x 10 ¹⁰ VP / 0.5mL solution)	2 doses up to 16 weeks apart)*	Only administered to persons 55 years of age & older as per NACI ***

* Based on emerging evidence of the protection provided by the first dose of a two dose series for COVID-19 vaccines currently authorized in Canada, the National Advisory Committee for Immunization ([NACI](#)) recommends that in the context of limited COVID-19 vaccine supply jurisdictions should maximize the number of individuals benefiting from the first dose of vaccine by extending the second dose of COVID-19 vaccine up to four months after the first.

** Patient eligibility criteria at the pharmacy is expected to change as COVID-19 vaccine supply fluctuates and the pandemic situation evolves. Please refer to the [ministry website](#) for the most recent EO Notice entitled “Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – **Eligibility**”.

² Please refer to the [ministry website](#) for the most recent EO Notice entitled “Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – **Eligibility**”.

*** NACI [recommends](#) that AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine should not be used in adults under 55 years of age at this time while the safety signal of Vaccine-Induced Prothrombotic Immune Thrombocytopenia (VIPIT) following vaccination with AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine is investigated further.

Billing Procedures – Summary

- Claims for administering the publicly funded COVID-19 vaccine can only be submitted electronically using the HNS (see “Billing Procedures - Detailed” below). No manual paper claims will be accepted.
- The Part A pharmacist who administers the vaccine or who is overseeing a registered pharmacy student, intern or pharmacy technician who administers the vaccine must be identified in the prescriber field on the claim.
- Each claim must include the Drug Identification Number (DIN) corresponding to the publicly funded COVID-19 vaccine that was administered to the patient (see Table 1 above).
- The person submitting the claim must ensure that the patient’s date of birth, Ontario health number and name (as it appears on the health card / document) are included in the claim. Failure to do so – especially for non-Ontario Drug Benefit (ODB) Program recipients – may impact the ability to submit future claims for these patients.
 - **For patients without an Ontario health card number, pharmacies must use the proxy patient ID: 79999 999 93 (see below for further details).**

Pharmacy Documentation Requirements

Pharmacies must keep a record of every dose of publicly funded COVID-19 vaccine administered.

Pharmacists shall keep records consistent with their obligations under the *Pharmacy Act, 1991*, the *Drug and Pharmacies Regulation Act*, the COVID-19 Vaccine Agreement, and any instructions or guidelines provided by the OCP or the ministry.

For purposes of post-payment verification, pharmacy records related to claims for administering a publicly funded COVID-19 vaccine must be maintained in a readily available format for the purpose of ministry inspection for a minimum of 10 years from the last recorded pharmacy service provided to the patient, or until 10 years after the day on which the patient reached or would have reached the age of 18 years, whichever is longer.

Overpayments due to inappropriate claim submissions are subject to recovery.

Pharmacy documentation must be maintained in a readily retrievable format and record requirements are:

- Record of name and address of patient.
- Record of patient's health number or alternate ID with contact information if applicable.
- Record of name of vaccine administered, dose, lot number, expiry date, time, date, route and site of administration.
- Record of pharmacy name, pharmacy address and name and signature of individual who administered the vaccine.
- Evidence of the provision of a written and electronic (if applicable) record of the COVID-19 immunization record to the patient, which includes the pharmacy's contact information and date and time for the second scheduled dose at the same pharmacy location. Note: date and time of the second dose may be hand-written on the written record provided to the patient.
- Records documenting compliance with any requirements to access and use the Provincial COVID-19 Vaccine Solution-COVAX_{ON} under the COVID-19 Vaccine Agreement.

Billing Procedures – Detailed

Claims submission requirements for administering publicly funded COVID-19 vaccines are as follows:

For ODB-eligible recipients

The claim submission follows the usual process (See [Section 5](#) of the Ontario Drug Program Reference Manual) for submitting claims on the HNS with the following additional information:

- Intervention code 'PS': (Professional Care Services)
- Drug Identification Number (DIN): as per the publicly funded COVID-19 vaccine administered (see Table 1 above)
- Valid Pharmacist ID

For Non-ODB recipients

When submitting a claim for a person who does not have ODB coverage, pharmacists must submit the following information:

- Patient Gender: 'F' = female; 'M' = male
- Patient Date of Birth: Valid YYYYMMDD
- Patient's Ontario Health Card number*
- Intervention codes:
 - PS: Professional Care Services
 - ML: Established eligibility coverage (i.e., 1 day of the Plan 'S' coverage)
- Carrier ID: 'S'
- Drug Identification Number (DIN): as per the publicly funded COVID-19 vaccine administered
- Valid Pharmacist ID

For patients without an Ontario health number

When submitting a claim for any eligible person who does not have an Ontario health number, pharmacists must submit the following information:

- First Name: Patient's first name
- Last Name: Patient's last name
- Patient Gender: 'F' = female; 'M' = male
- Patient Date of Birth: Valid YYYYMMDD
- Proxy patient ID: 79999 999 93
- Intervention codes:
 - PS: Professional Care Services
 - PB: Name entered is consistent with card
- Valid Pharmacist ID

Exclusions and Restrictions

- If a patient does not have a valid Ontario health card number, a pharmacist can still administer the publicly funded COVID-19 vaccine, provided that the patient provides

an alternate identification confirming their name and date of birth. In such cases, pharmacies must use the proxy patient ID: 79999 999 93.

- Administration of non-publicly funded COVID-19 vaccines that are privately purchased by the pharmacy does not qualify for payment.
- Pharmacists may not transfer publicly funded COVID-19 vaccine inventory to another pharmacy unless specifically approved by the ministry.
- Vaccine administration must occur at the location of the participating pharmacy premises.
- The role of pharmacists, pharmacy students, interns or pharmacy technicians administering the COVID-19 vaccine in other settings besides a pharmacy is excluded from this notice.
- A pharmacist’s recommendation to a prescriber that a patient should receive a COVID-19 vaccine is not a billable service under the Pharmaceutical Opinion Program.

Payment for epinephrine auto-injector for emergency treatment after administration of the COVID-19 vaccine

In the event of an adverse event resulting immediately after a pharmacist, registered pharmacy student, intern or pharmacy technician administers a publicly funded COVID-19 vaccine, the ministry will reimburse pharmacies for the acquisition cost of the epinephrine auto-injector up to the total amount reimbursed (see Table 2). Emergency treatment must take place in the pharmacy.

Table 2: Epinephrine products and reimbursement if required post COVID-19 vaccine administration

PIN	Epinephrine Product	Total Amount Reimbursed
09857423	Epipen 1/1000 (1mg/1mL) DIN 00509558	\$94.44
09857424	Epipen Jr. 0.5mg/mL DIN 00578657	\$94.44
09857439	Allerject 0.15mg/0.15mL DIN 02382059	\$94.44
09857440	Allerject 0.3mg/0.3mL DIN 02382067	\$94.44
09858129	Emerade 0.3mg/0.3mL Inj DIN 02458446	\$85.54
09858130	Emerade 0.5mg/0.5mL Inj DIN 02458454	\$85.54

Billing Procedures – Epinephrine Auto-Injector for Emergency

The value indicated in the 'Total Amount Reimbursed' column (Table 2) will be paid by the ministry for each valid claim for administering epinephrine auto-injector.

Pharmacy staff must use the product identification number (PIN) of the epinephrine product and bill as a second claim following the COVID-19 vaccine administration claim on the same day of service. Pharmacies cannot enter the DIN, a mark-up or a dispensing fee in the claim.

The ministry does not accept paper claims for the administration of epinephrine auto-injector claims.

For ODB-eligible recipients

The claim submission follows the usual process (See [Section 5](#) of the Ontario Drug Program Reference Manual) for submitting claims on the HNS with the following additional information:

- Intervention code 'PS': Professional Care Services
- Product Identification Number (PIN): as per the epinephrine auto-injection administered (see above)
- Valid Pharmacist ID

For Non-ODB recipients

When submitting a claim for a person who does not have ODB coverage, pharmacists must submit the following information:

- Patient's Ontario health card number*
- Intervention codes PS: Professional Care Services
- Product Identification Number (PIN): as per the epinephrine auto-injection administered (see Table 2 above)
- Valid Pharmacist ID code must be included with the claim

***For patients without an Ontario health number**

When submitting a claim** for any eligible person who does not have an Ontario health number, pharmacists must submit the following information:

- First Name: Patient's first name
- Last Name: Patient's last name
- Patient Gender: 'F' = female; 'M' = male
- Patient Date of Birth: Valid YYYYMMDD
- Proxy patient ID: 79999 999 93
- Intervention codes:
 - PS: Professional Care Services
 - PB: Name entered is consistent with card
- Valid Pharmacist ID

Restrictions on Epinephrine Auto-Injection

Epinephrine auto-injection will not be reimbursed in the following situations:

- Providing the epinephrine auto-injection to the patient to self-administer or take home (for example: in the event the patient may experience an adverse event after leaving the pharmacy).
- Pharmacist emergency injection of epinephrine auto-injection not due to an adverse drug reaction resulting from the administration of the publicly funded COVID-19 vaccine.

Prior EO Notices

- Executive Officer Notice: Administration of Publicly Funded COVID-19 vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies, (Effective Date March 10, 2021).
- Executive Officer Notice: Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – **Billing**, (Effective Date March 22, 2021).

Additional Information:

For pharmacy billing:

Please call ODB Pharmacy Help Desk at: 1-800-668-6641

For Support for Provincial COVID-19 Vaccine Solution-COVAX_{ON}:

Please contact your pharmacy head office or the [Ontario Pharmacists Association or the Neighbourhood Pharmacy Association of Canada](#)

For COVID-19 vaccine rollout in pharmacy:

Please email the ministry at: OPDPInfoBox@ontario.ca

For Ministry COVID-19 Vaccine-Relevant Information and Planning Resources

Please access this [website](#)

For all other Health Care Providers and the Public:

Please call ServiceOntario, Infoline at 1-866-532-3161 TTY 1-800-387-5559. In Toronto, TTY 416-327-4282.