

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

**Effective July 5, 2021**

Certain eligible pharmacies can administer publicly funded injectable COVID-19 vaccines to eligible Ontarians (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 June 25<sup>th</sup>, 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<sub>ON</sub>).
  - Mandatory scheduling of the second dose
  - Complying with any requirements to access and use the Provincial COVID-19 Vaccine Solution-COVAX<sub>ON</sub> under the COVID-19 Vaccine Agreement.
- 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)<sup>1</sup>.
- For clarity, where a patient meets the eligibility criteria for the vaccine<sup>2</sup> 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,<sup>3</sup> the vaccine cannot be administered to the patient even if they are

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<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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**”.

<sup>3</sup> 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**”.

not excluded by the restrictions. Note that certain eligibility criteria may be specific to a particular vaccine/DIN/PIN.

**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 <b>10 doses</b> (5 x 10 <sup>10</sup> VP / 0.5mL solution)	2 doses (4 to 16 weeks apart)*	18 years of age & older as per product monograph *** Not for first dose administration in most cases****
09857655	COVID-19 VACCINE AstraZeneca	Intramuscular injection solution. Multi-dose vial of <b>10 doses</b> (5 x 10 <sup>10</sup> VP / 0.5mL solution)	2 doses (4 to 16 weeks apart)*	18 years of age & older as per product monograph *** Not for first dose administration in most cases****
02510014	COVID-19 VACCINE MODERNA Moderna Therapeutics Inc.	Intramuscular injection solution. Multi-dose vial Dose:100 MCG / 0.5 mL	2 doses (4 to 16 weeks apart)*	18 years of age & older as per product monograph
02509210	PFIZER-BIONTECH COVID-19 VACCINE Pfizer Canada ULC	Intramuscular injection suspension (to be diluted) Multi-dose vial (after dilution, each vial contains 6 <sup>†</sup> doses of 0.3 mL) DOSE : 30mcg / 0.3mL	2 doses (3 to 16 weeks apart)*	12 years of age & older as per product monograph

\* [NACI](#) updated the recommendation on extended dose intervals on May 28, 2021 as well as an update on first and second dose recommendations on June 17, 2021. With the increase of COVID-19 vaccine supply in Canada, second doses should be offered as soon as possible (subject to the minimum dosing intervals listed in the table above), with priority given to those at highest risk of severe illness and death from COVID-19 disease after or concurrent with first doses for all remaining eligible populations. As such, the government is accelerating its second dose administration due to a reliable vaccine supply at this time.

Where a different product is used to complete the mRNA vaccine series, the appropriate minimal dose interval should be determined from the product monograph of the mRNA vaccine used for the first dose (21 days where the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine was used as a first dose, and 28 days where the Moderna vaccine was used as a first dose).

\*\* Patient eligibility criteria at the pharmacy is expected to change as COVID-19 vaccine supply fluctuates and the pandemic situation evolves. NACI guidelines now recommend interchangeability of vaccines (or vaccine mixing) which means a patient could receive one vaccine product for the first dose and a different vaccine product for the second dose to complete the two-dose vaccine series. For example, individuals who have received only their first dose of the COVISHIELD or AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine and who have not yet received a second dose can choose to either receive a second dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine, or to receive an mRNA (Pfizer or Moderna) vaccine for their second dose. According to [NACI](#) recommendations, an mRNA vaccine is now preferred as the second dose for individuals who received a first dose of the AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD vaccine, based on emerging evidence of a potentially better immune response from this mixed vaccine schedule and to mitigate the potential risk of VITT associated with viral vector vaccines. Individuals who received their first dose of the COVISHIELD or AstraZeneca vaccine and choose to receive one of the mRNA vaccines (Pfizer or Moderna) as their second dose may receive their second dose at an interval of at least 8 weeks depending on vaccine availability, unless they qualify for an accelerated dosing interval. 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**”.

\*\*\* The product monograph for the AstraZeneca / COVISHIELD vaccine states that the vaccine can be used in those 18 years of age and older, but see note below regarding the pause in first dose administration.

\*\*\*\*See Executive Officer Notice dated May 11, 2021 regarding the Ministry of Health’s direction to pause of the administration of first doses of publicly funded AstraZeneca / COVISHIELD COVID-19 vaccines in Ontario pharmacies, available [here](#). However, the administration of first doses of the AstraZeneca / COVISHIELD COVID-19 vaccine is not suspended for individuals with allergies to an mRNA vaccine. 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”.

†Low dead-volume syringes and/or needles can be used to extract 6 doses from a single vial. If standard syringes and needles are used, there may not be sufficient volume to extract a 6th dose from a single vial. Vial labels and cartons may state that after dilution, a vial contains 5 doses of 0.3 mL. The information in the Product Monograph regarding the number of doses per vial after dilution supersedes the number of doses stated on the vial labels and cartons.

## 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 other pharmacy staff administering 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.
- Record location of administration (inside pharmacy or pharmacy parking lot)
- 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<sub>ON</sub> under the COVID-19 Vaccine Agreement. Note: All respective health care providers whether pharmacist, intern, registered pharmacy student, pharmacy technician or other health care provider must identify themselves as the vaccinator in the COVAX<sub>ON</sub> system and on the vaccine receipt provided to the patient.

## 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, pharmacy staff 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.
- Pharmacies 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 pharmacy is permitted to administer publicly funded vaccines supplied by their distributor in a nearby location (e.g., an adjacent pharmacy parking lot) as long as they are able to ensure adherence to public safety and relevant Ministry policy / direction (including infection prevention and control measures) and any Ontario College of Pharmacist (OCP) standards, policies or guidelines. See the most recent version of the accompanying Questions & Answers for Pharmacists for more information.
- The role of pharmacists, pharmacy students, interns or pharmacy technicians administering the COVID-19 vaccine in other settings besides a pharmacy (e.g., mass immunization clinics) 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 pharmacy staff 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 or where the vaccine was administered, for example an adjacent pharmacy parking lot if applicable.

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

<b>PIN</b>	<b>Epinephrine Product</b>	<b>Total Amount Reimbursed</b>
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).
- Executive Officer Notice: Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – Billing, (Effective Date April 1, 2021).
- Executive Officer Notice: Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – Billing, (Effective Date April 19, 2021).
- Executive Officer Notice: Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – Billing, (Effective Date April 30, 2021).
- Executive Officer Notice: Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – Billing, (Effective Date May 6, 2021).
- Executive Officer Notice: Pause of the Administration of First Doses of Publicly Funded AstraZeneca / COVISHIELD COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies (May 11, 2021)
- Executive Officer Notice: Administration of Publicly Funded COVID-19 vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – Billing, (Effective May 13, 2021).
- Executive Officer Notice: Administration of Second Doses for Individuals who received First Dose of AstraZeneca / COVISHIELD COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies (May 21, 2021)
- Executive Officer Notice: Administration of Publicly Funded COVID-19 vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – Billing, (Effective May 31, 2021).
- Executive Officer Notice: Administration of Publicly Funded COVID-19 vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – Billing, (Effective June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021).
- Executive Officer Notice: Administration of Publicly Funded COVID-19 vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – Billing, (Effective June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021).

- Executive Officer Notice: Administration of Publicly Funded COVID-19 vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – Billing, (Effective June 17th, 2021).
- Executive Officer Notice: Administration of Publicly Funded COVID-19 vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – Billing, (Effective June 25th, 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<sub>ON</sub>:**

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](mailto: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.