

## LATEST UPDATE – FEBRUARY 3, 2021

As you may be aware, **residents and staff of public and private low income and affordable senior housing are included in the Phase Two of vaccine deployment in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, which begins today.**

The WHA is working with local public health officials to coordinate and set-up vaccination sites on our properties in order to ensure the highest possible participation and outcomes. More information will be forthcoming. You may also be able to get vaccinated through your doctor, or another site. Click here to find a vaccination location near you: <https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine>.

In Phase One, the state vaccinated first responders and frontline healthcare workers, with 75% of the Worcester Police Department and 78% of the Worcester Fire Department vaccinated so far! We are already beginning to see the results. New cases of COVID-19 in the city have started to drop and the more people vaccinated, the more likely we will be to see continuation of this positive outcome. **It is critical, in the meantime, that we all continue to take precautions; wear our masks, social distance, wash hands, and limit interaction with others.**

You probably have a lot of questions about whether the vaccine is right for you. Enclosed in this newsletter, we will attempt to answer some of the most commonly asked questions about the vaccine and to provide you with reputable, professional resources where you can learn more.

However, the easiest resource to help you make an informed, educated decision on whether or not the vaccine is right for you and your family is to **speak with your doctor**. You trust your doctor to examine you annually and/or when you are sick and to give you solid advice, referrals, vaccines, and prescriptions when you need them. Trust them now.

Thank you.



### Immunity for the **COMMUNITY**

Getting the vaccine is important because we need to come together as a community to eradicate this virus! As a Latina and mother, I want to hug my kids again and see my family, share food and celebrate life again. We can do this together!

Dr. Matilde Castiel,  
Commissioner of Health and Human Services,  
City of Worcester

thank you 

### Inmunidad para la **COMUNIDAD**

Recibiendo la vacuna es importante porque necesitamos unirnos como comunidad para erradicar este virus! Siendo latina y madre, quiero volver a abrazar a mis hijos y ver a mi familia, compartir comida y celebrar vida como antes. Podemos hacerlo juntos!

Dra. Matilde Castiel,  
Comisionado de Salud y Servicios Humanos,  
Ciudad de Worcester

gracias 

## VACCINE FAQs

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- **HOW WAS THE VACCINE DEVELOPED?**

- There are hundreds of coronaviruses - including four that can cause the common cold, and the coronaviruses that caused SARS and MERS outbreaks. Scientists have been studying coronaviruses for over 50 years!
- The ability to fast-track research and clinical trials was a direct result of worldwide cooperation and vast amounts of funding. In the US, Operation Warp Speed (OWS) partnered with multiple institutions to fund, develop, manufacture, and distribute 300 million doses.
- By providing resources and assuming the financial risk, OWS allowed companies to produce and stockpile vaccine doses even before they knew if they would work. By investing in multiple companies and platforms at once, OWS increased the odds of success.

- **IS THE VACCINE SAFE AND EFFECTIVE?**

- Yes. COVID-19 vaccines are approved as safe and effective by the FDA. Millions of people in the US and millions more across the world have received the COVID-19 vaccine.
- These vaccines have undergone the most intensive safety monitoring in US history and went through rigorous testing and trials. The Moderna vaccine has proven to reach 94% effectiveness two weeks after the second dose, and the Pfizer vaccine 95% effectiveness one week after the second dose. This has been documented in people of all ages, genders and ethnicities.

- **WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS?**

- Most side effects are minor and temporary, and seem to be more prevalent after the second dose.
- The most common include: arm soreness, fatigue, headache, body aches, chills, or fever. These side effects are called an “immune response” and are a good thing! These short-term, easily managed side effects are common with any vaccines, mean that the vaccine is working, and fade within 1-2 days.

- **WHAT IF I ALREADY HAD COVID?**

The vaccine is recommended for individuals who have recovered from COVID-19! In the clinical trial, results in participants who already had COVID-19 appeared beneficial, providing a “booster shot” so-to-speak to post-infection antibodies. People who have recovered from the infection may not have long lasting immunity and reinfection is possible, posing a risk to themselves and their family members.

## RESOURCES

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- **Where can I get vaccinated?** Click here: <https://www.mass.gov/covid-19-vaccine>.
- **FAQs:** <https://www.mass.gov/doc/umass-questions-and-answers-about-the-covid-19-vaccine/download>.
- **Vaccine myths v. facts:** <https://www.mass.gov/doc/umass-covid19-vaccine-myth-vs-fact/download>.

**CALL YOUR DOCTOR TO DETERMINE IF THE VACCINE IS RIGHT FOR YOU!**