

For Immediate Release
March 10, 2021

Haliburton County Community COVID-19 Vaccination FAQ

Together, the Haliburton Highlands Family Health Team, Haliburton Family Medical Centre, the County of Haliburton, Haliburton County Paramedic Service, and Haliburton Highlands Health Services are working collaboratively to finalize plans for a community vaccination hub in Haliburton County.

While those plans continue to come together, the partners felt it was important to share the following Frequently Asked Questions document with the community.

1. How will you determine the timing of COVID-19 vaccines for Haliburton County residents?

Prioritization (what groups of people will get the vaccines at what times) is based on guidelines from the Ontario Ministry of Health and the availability of vaccines from the Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit (HKPR DHU).

For more information about prioritization, visit Ontario.ca/CovidVaccine.

2. Is anyone in Haliburton County being vaccinated right now?

Currently, vaccinations have begun among Phase 1 priority groups, which are:

- Staff, essential caregivers, and residents who have not yet received a first dose in Long-Term Care homes and high-risk retirement homes
- Alternative level of care patients in hospitals who have a confirmed admission to a Long-Term Care home, retirement home, or other congregate care home for seniors
- Health care workers

3. What groups of people will be the next to receive their COVID-19 vaccine?

The next priority group, defined by the Ministry of Health, is adults 80 years of age and older.

4. When and where will I receive my COVID-19 Vaccine?

For those who are adults 80 years of age and older, vaccination dates have not yet been set.

Once vaccines have reached Haliburton County for this priority group, information will be released and distributed widely throughout the community.

Vaccinations for adults 80 years of age and older will happen at the Haliburton Family Medical Centre, even if the adult is not patient of the Haliburton Family Medical Centre.

When and where will I receive my COVID-19 Vaccine? (continued)

For those who are under 80+ years of age, your vaccination location may be different. Once the locations of subsequent vaccination clinics are confirmed, this information will be released and distributed widely throughout the community.

5. I am an 80+ year old adult with a permanent address in Haliburton County. How do I make an appointment to be vaccinated?

As of March 9, 2021, the partners do not yet have dates confirmed for when vaccinations for this group will occur. Once the dates are confirmed, based on the vaccine delivery dates from the HKPR District Health Unit, eligible adults will be able to book an appointment through the provincial booking system, which will include both online and call-in options.

It is important to note that although the provincial booking system will go live on March 15, 2021, the opening of appointment slots will not occur until vaccine delivery dates from the HKPR District Health Unit are confirmed.

Once the booking system is live AND vaccine delivery dates have been confirmed, appointment times for Haliburton will be populated in the provincial booking system and eligible adults will be able to book their appointment (online or by phone).

6. I am an 80+ year old adult, but my permanent address is not in Haliburton County. Can I book an appointment in Haliburton County?

No. Provincial vaccine supply and distribution is being delivered according to your permanent address (the primary address associated with your health card) and the vaccines that will be received into Haliburton County are intended for permanent residents. This decision comes directly from the Ontario COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force.

If you do not have a permanent address in Haliburton County, contact your local Public Health Unit or visit Ontario.ca/CovidVaccine for that information.

7. Can I call the Haliburton Highlands Family Health Team, Haliburton Family Medical Centre, Haliburton Highlands Health Services, or Haliburton Kawartha Pine Ridge District Health Unit to be added to a waiting list for a vaccine or to book my vaccine appointment?

All of our community partners understand how anxious everyone is to receive their vaccine (and we want you to get your vaccine as fast as possible!), but there is no waiting list for vaccines and the partners cannot book your appointment.

Please do not call community partners about vaccination appointments, as the calls tie up the phone lines and staff who need to be able to respond to other urgent health care needs.

8. Is there anything I can do while I am waiting to book a vaccine appointment?

Yes. Everyone who wishes to receive a COVID-19 vaccine must complete a Ministry of Health COVID-19 Vaccine Screening and Consent Form. You can complete the Screening and Consent Form ahead of time and bring it to your appointment. You will be screened and consent will be confirmed again at your appointment, so bringing this completed form will help speed up the process.

Forms are available to download at www.hhfht.com/covid-19/covid-19-vaccine-information

If you have an elderly family member and you can help them by downloading, printing, and completing the form, and can follow public health guidelines (masking and distancing from anyone outside your household), please do so.

For those who are not able to access the form online, community partners are currently working on a plan to distribute paper copies of the form widely across Haliburton County. Please stay tuned for more information.

9. What can I expect before, during, and after my vaccine appointment?

On your appointment day, be sure you pass the screening criteria from the COVID-19 Vaccine Screening and Consent Form. If you are feeling unwell, please cancel your appointment and book another one at a later date.

If you are feeling well, please:

- Wear a short-sleeved shirt to your appointment to help speed-up administration of the vaccine.
- Wear a mask if you have one. If you don't have a mask, one will be provided for you.
- Wear weather-appropriate clothing/outerwear, as you may be asked to wait in your car or outside for your appointment to start.
- Bring your completed COVID-19 Vaccine Screening and Consent Form, as well as your health card, to your appointment.

Plan to arrive to the Haliburton Family Medical Centre no more than 10 minutes before your appointment, but please do not arrive late. Keeping your appointment on time is critical for staff to be able to vaccinate large numbers of people. You can expect your appointment to take 30 minutes in total.

Parking at the Haliburton Family Medical Centre will be free for anyone with a vaccination appointment. Park in the visitors parking at the front of the centre. If the yellow gate is down for parking, you will receive a parking token prior to exiting.

What can I expect before, during, and after my vaccine appointment? (continued)

For those with mobility challenges, a drop-off zone will be available. Your driver can drop you off and then proceed to the parking lot.

Enter the Haliburton County Family Medical Centre on the ground-floor. You will be screened for COVID-19 and directed upstairs to check-in for your appointment. Follow the directions you are given by staff, as well as the posted signage. Once they are ready for you, you will be directed to vaccinator and they will administer your vaccine.

Following the administration of your vaccine, you will be directed to a waiting area for a mandatory 15-minute observation. Staff may ask you to remain for longer (up to 30 minutes) as needed.

You will then be checked-out with either a paper confirmation of your vaccination and/or an electronic confirmation sent to the email address you provided on your COVID-19 Vaccine Screening and Consent Form.

As required by all vaccination sites in the province, your vaccination information and date will be entered into the COVaxON reporting system by staff.

10. If I am not in the 80+ year age cohort, what can I expect before, during, and after my vaccine appointment?

The location of your clinic has not yet been confirmed. You can expect that the information in Question 8 about what your appointment will look like will be the same, but your appointment may be in a different location.

11. Can I choose which vaccine I want to receive?

No. Vaccination clinics do not choose which vaccine type or quantity they receive. Once vaccines are shipped to clinic locations, they must be used before their expiry date. Only once the supply has been exhausted will more shipments be sent.

For the current priority group of adults 80 years of age and older, current advice by the National Advisory Council on Immunization is not to administer the AstraZeneca vaccine to this group. Our local partners will follow these guidelines unless they change.

12. It looks like I won't be eligible to receive a vaccine for a while. What should I do until then?

Please continue to follow all public health measures to help stop the spread of COVID-19, including staying home as much as possible, practicing physical distancing, wearing a mask or face covering in public spaces, and getting tested for COVID-19 if you are experiencing any of the symptoms.

13. What if I am feeling unsure about receiving a vaccine?

Safe and reliable vaccines can help protect you and your family from COVID-19. They are an important tool to help stop the spread of the virus and allow individuals, families and workers to safely resume normal life.

The coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine does not cause a coronavirus infection. It helps to build up your immunity to the virus, so your body will fight it off more easily if it affects you.

Only vaccines that Health Canada determines to be safe and effective will be approved for use in Canada and available in Ontario.

The four vaccines currently approved by Health Canada:

- were tested on a large number of people through extensive clinical trials
- have met all the requirements for approval, including safety
- will be monitored for any adverse reactions that may occur after vaccination and appropriate measures will be taken

You can find more information about the safety of COVID-19 vaccines, how they work, and possible side effects by visiting [Ontario.ca/CovidVaccine](https://ontario.ca/covidvaccine) and looking for the section on "Vaccine Safety".