



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**This is an official
MS Health Alert Network (HAN) Alert**

MESSAGE ID: MSHAN-20210304-00504-ALT (Health Alert)
RECIPIENTS: All Physicians, Hospitals, ERs, ICPs, NPs, and
Healthcare Providers – Statewide
Thursday, March 4, 2021
SUBJECT: Expanded Eligibility Criteria for COVID-19 Vaccine to
Include all Individuals ≥ 50 years of Age

Dear Colleagues,

Mississippi continues to make great progress in vaccinating vulnerable populations in the state. The impact of COVID-19 on those aged 50 years and older has been significant. As of March 4, 2021, there have been 6,764 reported COVID-19 related deaths and 9,212 reported COVID-19 related hospitalizations in the state. Of those, 6,381 (94%) COVID-19 related deaths and 7,342 (80%) COVID-19 related hospitalizations have been among persons 50 years of age and older.

To date, almost 350,000 persons aged 50 years and older have received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine in the state. To increase the access to vaccination in this vulnerable population and prevent hospitalizations and deaths, Mississippi is modifying the eligibility criteria for COVID-19 vaccine in the state.

Beginning today March 4, 2021, the eligibility for COVID-19 vaccine is expanded to include all persons 50 years of age and older. The modified eligibility for COVID-19 vaccine in Mississippi are as follows:

- **All persons aged 50 years and older.**
- All teachers/staff/employees in K-12, preschool or childcare settings.
- All first responders (including law enforcement, public safety, fire services and emergency management officials)
- All healthcare personnel.
- Persons aged 65 years and older.
- Persons aged 16-49 years with underlying medical conditions, as follows: cancer, chronic kidney disease, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), Down syndrome, heart conditions (such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies), immunocompromised from solid organ transplant, obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 kg/m² or severe Obesity (BMI \geq 40 kg/m²), pregnancy, sickle cell disease, smoking, diabetes, or other medical conditions determined by the medical provider.

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To maximally protect Mississippi residents, COVID-19 vaccines allocated to Mississippi are intended for the following groups who meet the above eligibility criteria:

- Residents who live in Mississippi.
- People who work within the state of Mississippi.

Regards,

Paul Byers, MD
State Epidemiologist



Alerting Message Specification Settings

Originating Agency: Mississippi State Department of Health
Alerting Program: MS Health Alert Network (MS HAN)
Message Identifier: MSHAN-20210304-00504-ALT
Program (HAN) Type: Health Alert
Status (Type): Actual ()
Message Type: Alert
Reference: MSHAN-00504
Severity: Unknown
Acknowledgement: No
Sensitive: Not Sensitive
Message Expiration: Undetermined
Urgency: Undetermined
Delivery Time: 600 minutes

Definition of Alerting Vocabulary and Message Specification Settings

Originating Agency: A unique identifier for the agency originating the alert.

Alerting Program: The program sending the alert or engaging in alerts and communications using PHIN Communication and Alerting (PCA) as a vehicle for their delivery.

Message Identifier: A unique alert identifier that is generated upon alert activation (MSHAN-yyymmdd-hhmm-TTT (**ALT=Health Alert**, **ADV=Health Advisory**, **UPD=Health Update**, **MSG/INFO=Message/Info Service**)).

Program (HAN) Type: Categories of Health Alert Messages.

Health Alert: Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.

Health Advisory: Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.

Health Update: Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.

Health Info Service: Provides Message / Notification of general public health information; unlikely to require immediate action.

Status (Type):

Actual: Communication or alert refers to a live event

Exercise: Designated recipients must respond to the communication or alert

Test: Communication or alert is related to a technical, system test and should be disregarded



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Message Type:

Alert: Indicates an original Alert
Update: Indicates prior alert has been Updated and/or superseded
Cancel: Indicates prior alert has been cancelled
Error: Indicates prior alert has been retracted

Reference: For a communication or alert with a Message Type of “Update” or “Cancel”, this attribute contains the unique Message Identifier of the original communication or alert being updated or cancelled. “n/a” = Not Applicable.

Severity:

Extreme: Extraordinary threat to life or property
Severe: Significant threat to life or property
Moderate: Possible threat to life or property
Minor: Minimal threat to life or property
Unknown: Unknown threat to life or property

Acknowledgement: Indicates whether an acknowledgement on the part of the recipient is required to confirm that the alert was received, and the timeframe in which a response is required (Yes or No).

Sensitive:

Sensitive: Indicates the alert contains sensitive content
Not Sensitive: Indicates non-sensitive content

Message Expiration: Undetermined.

Urgency: Undetermined. Responsive action should be taken immediately.

Delivery Time: Indicates the timeframe for delivery of the alert (15, 60, 1440, 4320 minutes (.25, 1, 24, 72 hours)).