



State of Louisiana
Louisiana Department of Health
Bureau of Health Services Financing

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 17, 2024

TO: All Louisiana Medicaid Prescribing Providers and Pharmacists

FROM: Kimberly Sullivan, Medicaid Executive Director *KLS*

SUBJECT: Louisiana Medicaid Pharmacy COVID-19 Vaccine Countermeasures
Extended from the Public Health Emergency (PHE) for COVID-19

Effective January 1, 2025, the Louisiana Medicaid Fee for Service (FFS) Pharmacy Program and Managed Care Organizations (MCOs), will extend COVID-19 vaccine countermeasures from the Public Health Emergency (PHE). The extension applies to pharmacy claims submitted to Gainwell Technologies for FFS and to Prime Therapeutics, LLC for MCOs (Aetna, AmeriHealth Caritas, Healthy Blue, Humana Healthy Horizons, Louisiana Healthcare Connections, and UnitedHealthcare).

The Department of Health and Human Services has extended certain PREP Act liability protections for COVID-19 countermeasures through December 31, 2029.

- Extension of the allowance for pharmacists, qualified pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy interns to administer COVID vaccines to recipients ages 3 years and above.
- Extension of the allowance for pharmacists, qualified pharmacy technicians, and pharmacy interns to administer seasonal influenza vaccines to recipients ages 3 through 18 years. (Current state law will still allow adult vaccine administration.)

Pharmacists who have the "Authority to Administer" vaccines authorized by the Louisiana Board of Pharmacy may administer and bill for covered vaccines.

The ingredient cost of the vaccine will not be reimbursed for recipients under the age of nineteen as these vaccines are available through the Louisiana Vaccines for Children (VFC) program. If Medicaid is billed for a recipient 18 years or younger, only the **administration fee** will be reimbursed for these recipients.

Pharmacist Requirements

For COVID-19 vaccine administration reimbursement, the pharmacist shall:

- be registered with the Louisiana Board of Pharmacy with the “Authority to Administer” vaccines.
- be registered as a Louisiana Medicaid provider.
- report certain data elements to the CDC for each COVID-19 dose administered within 24 hours of administration, as a vaccination provider.
- inform the individual that the administration of an immunization or vaccine is not to be construed as being in lieu of an annual preventive visit with the individual's primary care or family physician.
- access Louisiana Immunization Network Kids Statewide (LINKS) prior to immunization administration to verify appropriate utilization according to Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) to prevent duplication, unnecessary doses, inappropriate age, etc., if possible.
- report each immunization to the Louisiana Department of Health, Office of Public Health's LINKS at the time of the immunization or as soon as reasonably practicable, thereafter.
- report all adverse events observed or which are reported to the pharmacist to the Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System, or its successor program; and further, the pharmacist shall refer the patient with an adverse event to appropriate medical care.
- request the name of a patient's primary care provider prior to the administering of any immunization. The pharmacist shall notify the primary care provider, by written or electronic communication, as soon as reasonably possible that the immunization was administered.
- ensure that pharmacy technicians and/or state-authorized pharmacy interns administering COVID-19 vaccines meet PREP Act qualifications. The qualified pharmacy technicians and/or state-authorized pharmacy interns act under the supervision of a qualified pharmacist. The supervising qualified pharmacist of qualified pharmacy technicians and/or state-authorized interns must comply with CDC, state, and federal requirements for COVID-19 vaccine administration.

Additional Information:

If you have questions about the content of this memo, you may contact the FFS pharmacy help desk by phone at (800) 437-9101.

FFS pharmacy claims should be submitted to Gainwell Technologies. MCO pharmacy claims should be submitted to Prime Therapeutics, LLC.

If you have questions about pharmacy claims billing, you may contact the appropriate plan at their pharmacy help desk listed in the chart below.

Healthcare Provider	Pharmacy Help Desk	Pharmacy Help Desk Phone Number
Aetna, AmeriHealth Caritas, Healthy Blue, Humana Healthy Horizons, Louisiana Healthcare Connections, UnitedHealthcare	Prime Therapeutics, LLC	(800) 424-1664
Fee for Service	Gainwell Technologies	(800) 648-0790

Please forward this notice to other providers to assist with notification. Your continued cooperation and support of the Louisiana Medicaid Program efforts to coordinate care and improve health are greatly appreciated.

KS/MBW/GJS

c: Healthy Louisiana Plans
 Melwyn B. Wendt
 Gainwell Technologies
 Prime Therapeutics, LLC