



Supervisor Tony Buffington  
**Blue Ridge District**  
*NewsFlash*



## Loudoun Awaits COVID Vaccinations for Adolescents Ages 12-15

### What You Need to Know About COVID-19 Vaccine Approval for Adolescents Ages 12-15

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**Approval of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine for adolescents ages 12 to 15 years by federal authorities is expected this week.**

As our community waits for this next phase of the ongoing vaccination efforts, it is important to keep in mind that approval of the vaccine for this new age group is a multistep process that may take several days before vaccinations in Loudoun County can begin.

Here are the steps that are required before the Loudoun County Health Department can begin vaccinating children ages 12 to 15 years:

- 1. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) must approve the Pfizer-BioNTech [request for an expansion](#) of the Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) of its COVID-19 vaccine to be used in people**

**aged 12 and older.** Once the FDA approves the request, you will probably see the story reported broadly by the news media; however, it is important to understand that additional approval steps are required before Loudoun County can begin vaccinating individuals 12 to 15.

2. **Following FDA approval, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices \(ACIP\)](#) must meet to discuss using this vaccine in adolescents and make a recommendation to the CDC** to do so. The ACIP has scheduled an emergency meeting for Wednesday, May 12, 2021, at which time they will likely recommend the vaccine for this age group. It is not possible to predict how long the ACIP will take to issue its recommendation; however, we can expect an expedited process under the current circumstances.
3. **Once ACIP makes a recommendation, the CDC director must adopt the recommendations.** The CDC will likely issue guidance to state health departments regarding the use of this vaccine for the 12- to-15 age group, which will likely occur within 24 hours.
4. **Finally, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) must adopt the CDC recommendation and authorize local health districts to begin vaccinating individuals aged 12 and older.** VDH has been planning for administration of vaccine to this new age group and is expected to adopt the recommendation very soon after the CDC adopts the recommendations—likely less than 24 hours after receiving the CDC recommendation.

It is not possible to predict how long the approval process will take, but we can assume that things will move rapidly in the coming days. Loudoun County hopes to have authorization to vaccinate children ages 12 to 15 years by the end of this week.

### **Making an Appointment**

Loudoun County cannot vaccinate anyone aged 12 to 15 until after it receives authorization from VDH and until after the county makes an

announcement regarding its plans for vaccinating this age group. Therefore, anyone who shows up for an appointment who is age 12 to 15 will be turned away prior to the county's official announcement.

Once Loudoun County is authorized to vaccinate individuals ages 12 to 15, parents can make an appointment at the Loudoun County Health Department clinic by [visiting our website](#) and following the steps for scheduling an appointment in the Vaccine Administration Management System (VAMS) for the Dulles Town Center location.

Anyone who needs assistance making an appointment, such as those who do not have access to the internet, should call the COVID-19 Information Line at 703-737-8300, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily.

Individuals ages 12 to 15 must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. The vaccination site continues to operate by appointment only. All individuals who would like to be vaccinated must have an appointment.

Because most other vaccine providers, such as retail pharmacies, operate independently of Loudoun County, it is not possible to predict how quickly other providers in Loudoun County will begin offering COVID-19 vaccine to individuals ages 12 to 15. We can expect, however, that soon after the federal government approves the vaccine for use in this age group, local providers that are equipped to receive and administer Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine will also begin offering appointments for individuals ages 12 to 15.

Visit [vaccines.gov](#) to find other COVID-19 vaccine providers in our community.

### **Vaccine Safety and Efficacy**

COVID-19 vaccines continue to be safe and effective. New vaccines are typically studied in adults first, and then gradually include younger age groups. This is a standardized process intended to study a new vaccine in the safest way possible. The request for expansion of the EUA is based on data from a clinical trial of 2,260 adolescents that [showed](#) that the vaccine was safe and effective in this age group.

Learn more about the safety of COVID-19 vaccine on the [CDC's website](#).

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***Coronavirus - We're in it together, we'll get through it together - Tony***

Be safe!



Tony Buffington  
Blue Ridge District Supervisor  
[tony.buffington@loudoun.gov](mailto:tony.buffington@loudoun.gov)

Rachael Holmes  
Chief of Staff  
[rachael.e.holmes@loudoun.gov](mailto:rachael.e.holmes@loudoun.gov)

Robin Bartok  
Legislative Aide  
[robin.w.bartok@loudoun.gov](mailto:robin.w.bartok@loudoun.gov)

Christi Maple  
Legislative Aide  
[christi.maple@loudoun.gov](mailto:christi.maple@loudoun.gov)

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Blue Ridge District | 1 Harrison Street, S.E. 5th Floor, PO Box 70000, Leesburg, VA 20177-7000

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