

Be a smart health care consumer

COVID-19 Vaccine Scams

Whenever there is a health crisis, scammers will find ways to cheat people out of their money. During the coronavirus pandemic, scammers are using robocalls, social media posts, and emails to take advantage of fear, anxiety, and confusion about COVID-19. They sell things that don't work, charge money for things that are free, and steal personal information. Now that the [COVID-19 vaccine](#) is in Los Angeles County, scammers are targeting local residents with new, vaccine-related schemes. Beware!



COVID-19 vaccine is being distributed in Los Angeles County in a fair and transparent way. If someone offers to sell you a chance to get vaccinated before it is your turn, it's a scam.

- Vaccine is only being offered to healthcare workers and people who live in long-term care facilities (for example nursing homes) right now.
- Essential workers who cannot work from home are likely to be offered the vaccine next because they are at high risk of being exposed to the COVID-19 virus. Older adults, and adults with medical conditions might also be next because they are more likely to become very sick if they get COVID-19.
- Children under 16 years of age will not be offered vaccine in the near future. The vaccines are not allowed to be given to this age group.
- As more vaccine is available it will be offered to everyone. **This will likely take months. Vaccine may not be offered to the general public until Spring/Summer 2021.**
- Information about how to get the vaccine will be posted on the Public Health's [COVID-19 webpage \(ph.lacounty.gov/Coronavirus/vaccine/\)](https://ph.lacounty.gov/Coronavirus/vaccine/) when vaccine is available for different groups.
- If you have questions, talk to your doctor. Call 2-1-1 or visit the [211LA website](#) if you need help finding a doctor.

COVID-19 vaccine will be given to Los Angeles County residents at no cost and *regardless of immigration status*. If someone says they can get you a special, low cost deal, or get you the vaccine under the table, it's a scam.

- You will not be charged a fee or co-pay to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. The doctor or pharmacy may charge a fee for giving the vaccine, but it should be covered by public and private insurance companies. People without health insurance can get COVID-19 vaccines for free.
- You will NOT be asked about your immigration status when you get a COVID vaccine. Your medical information is private. Your doctor is not allowed to share it with immigration officials.
- Visit the Los Angeles County [Office of Immigrant Affairs COVID-19 page](#) for updates on COVID-19 for immigrant residents.

A RED FLAG is a warning sign or signal that something might be a scam. Look out for these COVID-19 vaccine red flags:

- Someone offers to move you into an earlier group to get the vaccine for a fee.
- Someone tries to sell you a place on a COVID vaccine waiting list. **There is no "vaccine waiting list".**
- Someone on the street, online, on social media, or knocking on your door tries to sell you a shot of vaccine.

In one local COVID vaccine scam, a man reported that he was offered vaccines for his entire family at \$49 per person. Luckily, the man's credit card company declined the payment. Vaccines can only be given by licensed medical providers.

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- You get calls, texts, or emails about the vaccine. The caller asks for your personal or financial information. It can be your Social Security, bank account or credit card number. NEVER share these numbers or other personal information with an unknown caller or in a text or email.
- You see ads for fake vaccines or “miracle cures” using vitamins or other dietary supplements. Scammers promote these even though they have not been proven to work. The FDA has issued warning letters to many companies for selling products that claim to prevent, treat, or cure COVID-19.
- If anyone that isn’t well known in your community (like a doctor, a health care clinic, a pharmacy, a County health program) offers you a vaccine – think twice and check with your doctor. Don’t let the scammers win!

In fact, always talk to a doctor or other healthcare provider before taking any vaccine, medicine or health product.

Get Help

- **Find a doctor:** call 2-1-1 the LA County information line or visit the [211LA website](#).
- **Find resources like food, medicines, and other essential supplies:** call 2-1-1 or visit the [211LA website](#), or the Public Health [resource webpage](#).
- **Report a possible COVID-19 scam and get help trying to get your money back:** contact the LA County Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA): [dcba.lacounty.gov](#) or 800-593-8222.
- **Report suspicious claims being made about vaccines, testing or treatment products:** report to the FTC at [ftc.gov/complaint](#)

Stay up to date – with trusted information

Beware of fake news and hoaxes as well as COVID-19 scams

Coronavirus Updates

- Visit [ph.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus](#), sign up for press releases, or follow us @lapublichealth
- Visit the County’s COVID-19 webpage [covid19.lacounty.gov](#)
- Check the CDC’s website [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](#)

Scam Alerts

Stay up to date on the latest scams and precautions you and your family should take.

- Learn about recent scams from the Los Angeles County Consumer and Business Affairs' [consumer alerts](#)
- Visit the Los Angeles County [Office of Immigrant Affairs COVID-19](#) webpage
- Sign up for the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) [Fraud Alerts Watch](#)
- Sign up to receive the Federal Trade Commission’s [consumer alerts](#)

Learn about other common COVID-19 Scams and Fraud by visiting [ph.lacounty.gov/hccp/covidscams](#).

Sign up for the COVID-19 Vaccine Email Newsletter

To sign up for regular updates on the COVID-19 vaccine, please visit the [COVID-19 Vaccine](#) web page.