

# COVID-19 Immunization: Prefilled Syringes Policy

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This policy is issued under the direction of the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH) and will be re-evaluated the 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2021.

## Introduction

Due to the extenuating circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic which include:

- limited COVID-19 vaccine supply
- stringent and specific storage and handling requirements that punctured or reconstituted vials cannot be transported
- lack of evidence on interchangeability of vaccines
- the need to minimize vaccine wastage, and
- the need to immunize vulnerable people who are not able to attend an immunization clinic

this policy is needed to allow the immunizer to pre-fill syringes with COVID-19 vaccine for single use and allow for appropriate transportation of these pre-filled syringes of COVID-19 vaccine when a full vial is not required.

## Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to outline the minimum expectations for immunizers in the preparation, transportation and administration of prefilled COVID-19 vaccine syringes, under warranted situations as outlined below.

## Policy Direction

For the purpose of administering a COVID-19 vaccine in a setting where a full vial is not required and doses would be wasted; the immunizer may pre-fill syringes with COVID-19 vaccine and transport them appropriately (following policy direction as outlined in [Alberta Vaccine Storage and Handling for COVID-19 Vaccine](#)).

The pre-filled syringes must be administered within 6 hours of the vaccine vial being punctured and/or reconstituted.

This is not to be implemented as part of routine practice. Situations where this may be warranted include:

- congregate care sites for a small number of residents who missed the immunization clinic and
- home visits for homebound individuals.

The Policy applies only in the context as presented and does not extend to the prefilling of syringes for medication administration in other instances.

## Requirements

In addition to the Alberta *Immunization Regulation*, regulatory and employer requirements, immunizers must:

- Label the prefilled COVID-19 vaccine syringe with the vaccine type, vaccine lot number, and date and time the vial was first punctured and/or reconstituted, and
- Only administer the COVID-19 vaccine that they have drawn up and labelled themselves.

CARNA, CLPNA and CRPNA have been informed of this interim policy. It is the regulatory colleges' expectation that all regulated members must follow public health advice and guidance set out by the Chief Medical Officer of Health (CMOH), under the Public Health Act during this declared state of public health emergency. Regulated members are encouraged to contact their regulatory body with any Standard of Practice related questions.