



March 3, 2021

Dear COVID-19 Vaccine Provider:

First and foremost, thank you for all you have done to administer COVID-19 vaccine across the State of Texas. Your efforts are greatly appreciated. As of today, you have administered nearly 6 million doses to your fellow Texans, and more than 2 million are now fully vaccinated.

Yesterday, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services directed states to expand vaccine eligibility to include people who work in school and child care operations. As stated in the attached federal directive, this includes

**“those who work in pre-primary, primary, and secondary schools, as well as Head Start and Early Head Start programs (including teachers, staff, and bus drivers) and those who work as or for licensed child care providers, including center-based and family care providers.”**

In light of this federal directive, all vaccine providers in Texas should immediately include these personnel in vaccination administration and outreach to ensure they are able to be immunized. This action does not change the other groups prioritized for vaccination in Texas, and I encourage you to continue your efforts to vaccinate older adults since the burden of COVID-19 falls so severely on people ages 65 and older.

Additionally, please track to the best of your ability the number of education and child care employees vaccinated. In the coming days, the TDEM reporting portal will be updated to allow you to report these numbers as part of your daily reporting. This information will be key to help Texas keep track of its progress in vaccinating this group.

The state of Texas appreciates your continued dedication and flexibility as we progress through COVID-19 vaccination.

Sincerely,

John Hellerstedt, M.D.  
Commissioner