

DHS backs Pfizer vaccine booster shots for high-risk groups

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The state Department of Health Services is backing the recommendation that certain populations who received Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine get a booster and has begun the process of helping providers begin delivering the shots.

The agency's move Monday came after the U.S. Centers for Disease Control on Friday announced those who received the Pfizer vaccine could receive booster shots. Those covered include seniors 65 and over, nursing home residents and those at least 50 years old who have underlying medical conditions.

The DHS highlighted those the agency said should get a booster shot of Pfizer at least six months after their second dose. That includes those living in long-term care.

The agency also said certain populations may receive the booster, including those aged 18-49 with underlying medical conditions and those 18-64 who are at increased risk of transmission because of their job or institutional settings. That includes first responders, educators and manufacturing workers.

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The DHS announcement comes as Wisconsin's seven-day average of new confirmed cases was at 2,603 as of Sunday. Wisconsin last averaged those numbers in January, before the vaccine was widely available. Nearly 57 percent of the state's population has now received at least one dose of the vaccine.

"Booster doses are another tool at our disposal to stop the spread of the highly transmissible Delta variant and slow the spread of COVID-19 in communities throughout Wisconsin," said DHS Secretary Karen Timberlake.

The CDC has not yet recommended boosters for those who received the Moderna or Johnson & Johnson vaccines.

Gov. Tony Evers received the Moderna vaccine when he received the first and second dose in February and mid-March.

“The governor encourages eligible Wisconsinites to get the safe, effective COVID-19 vaccine and the Pfizer booster if applicable,” Evers spokeswoman Britt Cudaback said. “In the event the CDC recommends a booster shot for which the governor is eligible, the governor will receive the booster shot and will encourage eligible Wisconsinites to receive one as well.”

See the DHS release [here](#).