



CITY of NORTHAMPTON
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
Public Health Director ~ Merridith O'Leary
Municipal Building ~ 212 Main Street ~ Northampton, MA 01060
Phone (413)587-1214 ~ Fax (413)587-1221
<http://www.northamptonma.gov/245/Health>

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COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Shots for 5- to 11-Year-Olds Potentially Available as Soon as Next Week Northampton Health Department Clarifies FDA Announcement

NORTHAMPTON - Boosters for young people ages 5- to 11-years old may be available at Northampton Health Department clinics as early as next week. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced today, May 17, 2022, that it had amended the emergency use authorization (EUA) for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine, authorizing the use of a single booster dose. This does not mean this dose is currently available to the American public. Before that can happen, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) must first make a recommendation based on the FDA's data and presentation that came out today.

The FDA was expected to recommend allowing booster doses for 5- to 11-year-olds on June 23, 2022, making this date a surprise for most vaccination providers. Naturally, given the decision is not yet final, there will not be 5- to 11-year-old boosters available at the Northampton High School clinic on Wednesday, May 18, 2022, or at the Thornes Marketplace clinic on Thursday, May 19, 2022.

"The behind-the-scenes vaccine approval process can be confusing to the public. The Northampton Health Department stands ready to re-tool its clinics and prepare its staff and volunteers to accommodate new doses and new age groups. We were not expecting this announcement this week, so we ask the public to be patient as we order vaccines and plan for vaccinating younger children," said Public Health Nurse Kate Kelly. "The Northampton Health Department will order vaccines as soon as approvals come through from the CDC and Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH). We will plan to accommodate some children next week and certainly into June."

The Northampton Health Department encourages all members of the community to get their COVID vaccine and stay up-to-date on boosters. Staff and volunteers continue to provide Moderna, Pfizer, and Pediatric Pfizer vaccines at the clinics. The vaccine is available for anyone aged five and older. Clinics will reopen at the tent outside the Northampton High School from 4 to 6 p.m. on Wednesday, May 18, 2022, Wednesday, May 25, 2022, and on Mondays and Thursdays in June. Individuals who live in Northampton Housing Authority properties should check community room schedules for vaccine clinics.

More information about clinics and vaccines can be found at www.northamptonma.gov and by clicking on COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics.

For more information on this announcement, contact Kate Kelly, Public Health Nurse, at kkelly@northamptonma.gov or the Health Department at (413) 587-1214.