

Introduction

1. In locations where there are no national COVID-19 vaccination programmes and where UN personnel may not have access to COVID-19 vaccine, or to a WHO approved COVID-19 vaccine, the United Nations, through the Department of Operational Support (DOS) of the United Nations Secretariat, is putting in place alternative arrangements to ensure that such personnel and their eligible family members can be vaccinated through a UN-led COVID-19 vaccination programme.
2. It will take some time before all eligible individuals in those locations receive the vaccine through the UN-led programme. As production capacities of approved vaccine manufacturers cannot immediately meet the overall global demand, the vaccines distributed by the UN will be rolled out in a phased approach, based on a country prioritization established by an inter-agency and multidisciplinary taskforce as well as taking into account operational considerations including logistics, safety and security.
3. Within a given country, the vaccines will be administered to eligible individuals based on the UN Medical Directors recommendations¹ ([here](#) and [here](#)), in particular the COVID-19 vaccine occupational risk groups prioritization matrix, and on the basis of the principles outlined in the [WHO SAGE values framework](#).
4. The UN-led COVID-19 vaccination programme is planned to start in March 2021.
5. These FAQs will be reviewed periodically, as necessary, by the Chief Executive Board (CEB) Human Resources Network and amended accordingly.

1. Who is eligible to be vaccinated through the UN-led COVID-19 vaccination programme?

10. The UN-led COVID-19 vaccination programme intends to support the following categories of individuals – who are serving and/or residing in the duty stations in which the UN-led COVID-19 vaccination programme will be carried out:
 - UN common system personnel and World Bank Group and International Monetary Fund personnel:
 - Staff members²,
 - UN Volunteers,
 - Interns,
 - Consultants and individual contractors, and
 - Other personnel holding a direct UN contract³;
 - Eligible family members: spouses/partners and dependent children recognized under the staff regulations and rules of the respective UN system organizations, who are authorized to reside at the duty station with the staff member or who reside at a location where the UN is running a COVID-19 vaccination programme;

¹ As available at the time of publication of these FAQs and as may be supplemented or changed.

² Including Junior Professional Officers (Associate Experts); technical cooperation experts on non-reimbursable loans; and personnel provided to the organizations by governments or other entities responsible for the remuneration of their services.

³ For example, UN personnel holding a service contract.

- Accompanying eligible family members of non-staff personnel as defined by the UN system organizations' staff regulations and rules and policies, who are authorized to reside at the duty station with such personnel or who reside at a location where the UN is running a COVID-19 vaccination programme.
 - Military and Police personnel and dependents deployed by the United Nations (including troops of AMISOM);
 - UN Retirees in receipt of a pension benefit from the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF) or from the IMF Staff Retirement Plan (SRP), or the World Bank Group SRP who have established their normal place of residence in a country where a UN-led COVID-19 vaccination programme is carried out.
11. The UN-led COVID-19 vaccination programme is not intended to include anyone residing or serving in countries offering an approved COVID-19 vaccine through a national vaccination programme to which they would have access.
12. It should also be noted that COVID-19 vaccines are currently not approved for use in children under the ages of 16 or 18 depending on the vaccines' manufacturer.

2. How will the prioritization of eligible individuals be determined?

13. In line with the current approach of most countries, the intention of the UN-led COVID-19 vaccination programme is to cover in the first instance individuals who fall into defined higher risk groups including UN front-line workers.
14. On the basis of the UN Medical Directors recommendations, in particular the COVID-19 vaccine occupational risk groups prioritization matrix, and on the basis of the principles outlined in the WHO SAGE values framework, such priority groups are:
- UN Health Care Workers and Emergency Medical Services⁴;
 - UN personnel with one or several chronic medical conditions that increases their risk of severe disease;
 - Pregnant UN personnel (provided vaccine is determined to be safe and effective for this group);
 - Mission critical personnel such as UN front-line workers and uniformed personnel (as determined by the UN system organizations in accordance with their business continuity plans, programme criticality assessment and other relevant local circumstances); and
 - Other UN personnel and their eligible family members not belonging to any of the previously listed groups.
15. Subject to vaccine availability and other operational requirements, the following eligible individuals would then be considered:
- Staff members and non-staff personnel who are home-based as per their conditions of employment (i.e. not due to COVID-19); and
 - UN Retirees in receipt of a pension benefit from the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund (UNJSPF) or from the IMF Staff Retirement Plan (SRP), or the World Bank Group SRP who have established their normal place of residence in a country where an UN-led COVID-19 vaccination programme is carried out.

⁴ Including personnel who will be placed at risk of infection due to the direct nature of their work – e.g. field teams dealing with COVID-19 issues, vaccination teams, etc.

3. How will onsite contractor and vendor/service providers be vaccinated?

16. Onsite contractors, vendors and service providers who are employed by a third party (i.e. no direct contract with the UN) are normally expected to be vaccinated through the COVID-19 vaccination programmes carried out by their national/host country.

4. How about project staff? (for example, an entity is implementing a project with a partnership agreement with a consulting firm; as per the donor requirement, the project field staff are hired through the firm)

17. Project staff are eligible if they hold a contract directly with the UN.

5. Who is considered a UN front-line worker?

18. The notion of UN front-line workers is relevant in the context of business continuity and or programme critically or other relevant local circumstances and depends on various factors such as the nature and extent of the crisis and the mandate of the respective UN organizations.

6. Is vaccination against COVID-19 mandatory for UN personnel?

19. At present, Covid-19 vaccination is voluntary for UN personnel and their family members, however they are strongly encouraged to receive an approved COVID-19 vaccination.

20. Any immunization procedure, regardless of whether it has been approved by WHO or endorsed by the UN Medical Directors, should be based on the recipient's informed consent. It is strongly recommended that all UN personnel and their family members participating in national vaccination campaigns obtain comprehensive information/briefing from their healthcare provider or treating physician on the type of vaccine being offered, in order to be able to exercise an informed decision about whether or not to take the vaccine being offered by the national/ host country.

21. The UN provides regular and up-to-date information from different sources on the state of progress in the field of research and development of vaccines globally so that UN personnel and their family members can take an informed decision as to whether to participate in the vaccination programme or not. In addition, the UN seeks to coordinate its system-wide action based on the recommendations of the WHO as lead health agency while taking into account the national covid-19 regulations in the different host countries, as applicable. UN personnel and their family members may also consult their private doctors for additional information.

22. More WHO information on the COVID-19 vaccine can be found [here](#). For more information from the UN Medical Directors regarding COVID-19 vaccines, see [here](#).

[Insert link to organization-specific covid-19 portal]

23. Consistent with the UN standards of conduct and host country agreements, where applicable, UN personnel are expected to respect and comply with instructions, preventive and protective measures and other anti-COVID-19 policies of the host country.

24. Should the national authorities of the duty station where UN personnel and their family members work and reside decide to render vaccination mandatory (whether with a WHO approved vaccine or not), in case of doubt, UN personnel should inquire by sending an email to covidvaccines@un.org and/or seek clarifications from their organizations' local HR and Medical offices.

7. Will vaccinations become a requirement for physical return to the premises in the next normal when we get to that stage?

25. Whilst the UN organizations do not intend to make COVID-19 vaccination mandatory, including in the context of a physical return to the premises, receiving such vaccination is strongly recommended.
26. All UN personnel and their family members are strongly encouraged to receive the COVID-19 vaccination, even though it is not required by the UN organizations at present.
27. Any immunization procedure, regardless if approved by WHO or endorsed by the Medical Directors, should be based on the recipient's informed consent. At present receiving a COVID-19 vaccination is not a precondition for UN personnel returning to the premises.
28. Consistent with the UN standards of conduct and host country agreements, where applicable, UN personnel are expected to respect and comply with instructions, preventive and protective measures and other anti-COVID-19 policies of the host country.
29. Should the national authorities of the duty station where UN personnel and their family members work and reside decide to render vaccination mandatory (whether with a WHO approved vaccine or not), in case of doubt, UN personnel should inquire by sending an email to covidvaccines@un.org and/or seek clarifications from their organizations' local HR and Medical offices.

8. What if I do not want to receive the specific type of vaccine offered to me?

30. It will be up to the individual to decide if they want to be vaccinated or not and whether they want to accept the type of vaccination being offered by the national/ host country or through the UN-led vaccinations programme (if applicable).
31. Consistent with the UN standards of conduct and host country agreements, where applicable, UN personnel are expected to respect and comply with instructions, preventive and protective measures and other anti-COVID-19 policies of the host country.
32. Should the national authorities of the duty station where UN personnel and their family members work and reside decide to render vaccination mandatory (whether with a WHO approved vaccine or not), in case of doubt, UN personnel should inquire by sending an email to covidvaccines@un.org and/or seek clarifications from their organizations' local HR and Medical offices.

9. What if I want to be vaccinated in my home country?

33. That is a personal choice and up to the individual to decide. The UN will not be responsible for the cost of transportation to the home country. Eligible staff members (and their eligible family members) may however take advantage of home leave, family visit or reverse education grant travel to their home country and be vaccinated when the vaccine becomes available there.
34. Consistent with the UN standards of conduct and host country agreements, where applicable, UN personnel are expected to respect and comply with instructions, preventive and protective measures and other anti-COVID-19 policies of the host country.
35. Should the national authorities of the duty station where UN personnel and their family members work and reside decide to render vaccination mandatory (whether with a WHO approved vaccine or not), in case of doubt, UN personnel should inquire by sending an email to covidvaccines@un.org and/or seek clarifications from their organizations' local HR and Medical offices.

10. Will medical insurance pay for the vaccine?

36. In situations where vaccines are not offered free of charge by national governments, and depending on the individual's type of contract, they might be covered by the UN medical insurance or by the individual's personal medical insurance policies according to the applicable conditions, WHO recommendations, and locally approved vaccine type (insert organization-specific information).

11. How will uniformed personnel be vaccinated?

37. Individual military and police serving under direct contract with the organizations will be provided access to the vaccine in the same manner as other UN personnel. In the case of military contingents and formed police units, the Department of Operational Support and the Department of Peace Operations are liaising with Troop and Police Contributing Countries, and other Member States, to identify the best possible approach towards the vaccination of uniformed personnel.