

Booster and 3rd Dose Implementation FAQs for Health Care Providers

What is the definition/criteria for caregiver and are they eligible for boosters?

Designated essential caregivers in congregate settings (such as LTCH/RHs, supportive housing, etc.) are included in the definition of HCWs and are eligible for booster doses.

What is the difference between “3rd dose” and “boosters”?

The clinical definition for third dose is for immunocompromised individuals who did not have a strong initial immune response and have been recommended to receive a third dose for their primary series.

Booster is for all other individuals with waning immunity, whose primary series is complete.

Third doses/boosters are not currently required for vaccine credentials in Ontario.

Can populations have a different brand for their booster?

Yes, mixing vaccine types is permitted. Example: Moderna can be chosen, even if they have 2 doses of Pfizer. If a contraindication is in the history, use clinical discretion for 3rd dose. Please follow NACI guidelines.

Are the side effects frequency of the booster similar to second dose?

Some studies have suggested mRNA booster doses are generally well tolerated and provide a strong booster effect regardless of the vaccine used in the primary series.

The safety and effectiveness of a third dose in persons who had a previous SARS-CoV-2 infection is currently unknown. The rate of myocarditis and pericarditis following a booster dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine is currently unknown. [NACI](#) statement will provide a summary of the current safety evidence.

What is the minimal age eligibility for boosters for HCW?

HCW are eligible for third doses based on the six-month (168-day) interval from the second dose. At this time, Ontario is not actively recommending third or booster doses for HCWs under 18, however some HCW 16- and 17-year-olds were vaccinated as part of the first priority rollout given Pfizer’s product monograph and these individuals should be considered eligible at this time. This provides flexibility for PHUs to use their discretion to vaccinate HCWs so long as they have had a six-month (168-day) interval from their second dose.

What is the minimal age eligibility for boosters for FNIM?

FNIM adults are eligible for third doses based on the six-month (168-day) interval from the second dose. At this time, Ontario is not actively recommending third or booster doses for FNIM individuals under 18, however some FNIM 16- and 17-year-olds were

vaccinated as part of the first priority rollout given Pfizer's product monograph and these individuals should be considered eligible at this time. This provides flexibility for PHUs to use their discretion to vaccinate FNIM individuals 16+, so long as they have had a six-month (168-day) interval from their second dose.

Will boosters be required in order to have a valid vaccine passport?

No, the third doses are not mandatory and will not be required for vaccine passports.

The fully vaccinated definition will remain the same.

If someone aged 18 to 24 years old had two doses of Moderna, should the individual receive Pfizer or Moderna for their third dose?

It is recommended to receive Pfizer as there are no concerns with mixing doses and there is limited data on Myocarditis risk. The individual may still choose Moderna with informed consent.

Does the preferential recommendation for Pfizer for individuals aged 18-24 apply to the booster/third doses?

Yes. There is limited data on Myocarditis risk with the recommended half dosage for boosters. The individual may still choose Moderna with informed consent

Can individuals who have a mixed series of viral vector and mRNA vaccines receive a booster dose?

No. At this time a booster dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine will be offered for the following individuals:

- Individuals who received two doses of AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD COVID-19 vaccine
- Individuals who received one dose of Janssen/Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine