

COVID-19 Vaccine FAQ for Employers

Updated 1/8/21



Who is paying for the vaccine?

As authorized through the CARES Act, the vaccine itself will be paid for by the federal government. Costs for administering vaccinations will be paid by PacificSource for fully insured plans, and by employer groups for self-funded plans.

Will there be cost shares related to the vaccine for members?

According to the CDC, all employer group plans, including grandfathered plans, are required to cover the administration, without cost sharing, of the COVID-19 vaccine effective December 28, 2020.

Can providers balance bill patients for costs associated with administering the vaccine?

No. Providers may not balance bill patients for costs associated with COVID-19 vaccine administration.

Will cost shares apply to administering the vaccine at out-of-network facilities?

During the Public Health Emergency period for COVID-19, cost sharing is prohibited at out-of-network facilities. After the emergency expires, out-of-network cost shares will apply.

What is the cost to administer the COVID-19 vaccine?

For COVID-19 vaccines administered in network, the plan will pay the negotiated rate.

For vaccines administered out-of-network, the reimbursement rate to providers will be based on a reasonable cost as determined by prevailing market rates, typically based on the Medicare rate.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services, the rates are as follows:

- Single-dose administration: \$28.39
- Two-dose administration: first dose \$16.49, second dose \$28.39
- These rates will be geographically adjusted.

Is the vaccination covered as a medical benefit or as a pharmacy benefit?

Vaccine administration is covered under the medical plan when given by a medical provider, and under the pharmacy benefit when given by a pharmacy.

Can an employer require employees to be vaccinated for COVID-19?

Please consult with your legal counsel or refer to OSHA for guidance.