

**From:** DMHC Licensing eFiling

**Subject:** APL 21-023 – Flu Vaccines; Preparation for COVID-19 Vaccines

**Date:** Monday, November 1, 2021, 11:41 AM

**Attachments:** APL 21-023 – Flu Vaccines; Preparation for COVID-19 Vaccines (11.1.2021).pdf

Dear Health Plan Representative:

Please find attached All Plan Letter (APL) 21-023, reminding health plans of their obligation to cover influenza vaccinations. As well as encouraging plans to take steps now to proactively prepare for the administration of COVID-19 vaccines to children between age 5 to 11 years.

Thank you.

## ALL PLAN LETTER

**DATE:** November 1, 2021

**TO:** All Full-Service Health Care Service Plans

**FROM:** Sarah Ream  
Chief Counsel

**SUBJECT:** APL 21-023– Flu Vaccines; Preparation for COVID-19 Vaccines for Children  
5-11 Year Olds

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This All Plan Letter (APL) reminds health plans of their obligation to cover influenza vaccinations.

The APL also encourages plans to take steps now so they can proactively prepare for the administration of COVID-19 vaccines to children between age 5 to 11 years as soon as the vaccine is approved for use in that population.

### Flu Vaccinations

The DMHC reminds health plans of their existing obligation to cover CDC recommended immunizations, including influenza vaccinations, without any cost-sharing.<sup>1</sup> Health plans should take steps to ensure enrollees can easily access the influenza vaccine. Such steps could include relaxing utilization management requirements or similar policies to lessen enrollee barriers to receiving the vaccine. Health plans are also encouraged to engage in outreach activities to promote the influenza vaccine to their enrollees.

### Preparation for administration of COVID-19 vaccines to children ages 5-11

The DMHC anticipates the Centers For Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will issue an Emergency Use Authorization for the COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5 to 11 in the coming days. Plans should take immediate steps, if they have not done so already, to ensure eligible pediatric plan enrollees can access the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as the CDC authorizes its use. Such steps include preparing the plans' claims processing systems so plans can correctly process COVID-19 vaccine administration claims for children ages 5 to 11 years. Doing so will help avoid delays in reimbursement to providers that some providers reported experiencing when the COVID-19 vaccine was first approved for enrollees twelve and older.

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<sup>1</sup> California Health and Safety Code section 1367.002.

Plans should also actively engage with enrollees and/or their families to ensure enrollees and/or their families are aware of the availability of the vaccine for pediatric populations and how to access the vaccine.

If you have questions regarding this APL, please contact your health plan's assigned reviewer in the DMHC's Office of Plan Licensing.