

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Friday, Sept. 19, 2025

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**Vermont Medical Society Joins State Agencies in
Confirming Access to the COVID-19 Vaccine this Fall**

*Vermont Physician Group Highlights Critical Role of Immunization in Preventing the Spread of
Infectious Diseases and Protecting Vulnerable Populations*

For Immediate Release: (Montpelier, VT) Today, immediately following the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) meeting the Vermont Medical Society (VMS) hosted a press briefing with Vermont clinicians, along with state agency and legal experts for a virtual press briefing to discuss the implications of access to vaccines this fall for all Vermonters.

Representatives from the VMS, Dept. of Health, Dept. of Financial Regulation, Dept. of Vermont Health Access, Secretary of State, and provider liability expert, John Wallace, J.D., from Primmer Piper Eggleston and Cramer, affirmed for clinicians and the general public that Vermont remains dedicated to making all recommended vaccines readily available, accessible, and affordable across the state.

"We know that Vermonters, clinicians and patients alike, have many questions about access to COVID-19 vaccines this fall. While decisions by the federal government are destabilizing access to evidence-based care, we are grateful to our state partners and health and legal experts who are working together to get us all answers and help ensure that clinicians and pharmacists can provide vaccines to anyone who wants one," said Jessa Barnard, Executive Director of the Vermont Medical Society.

"Yesterday the Health Department took steps to expand access to COVID-19 vaccines, ensuring Vermonters who want the protection of a vaccine can choose to get one – especially those at higher risk of severe illness. The science behind the vaccine's effectiveness at preventing serious illness from COVID-19 has not changed. We encourage Vermonters to get vaccinated this fall for the best possible protection from the risks of COVID-19," said Meridith Plumpton, Immunization Program Manager at the Vermont Dept. of Health.

"DFR is committed to working with other agencies in state government to ensure that Vermonters continue to have access to vaccinations supported by scientific evidence and

recommended by independent experts and associations,” said Mary Block, J.D., Deputy Commissioner of Insurance at the Dept. of Financial Regulation.

“Vaccinations are the most effective tool we have to protect children from preventable infectious diseases. Vermont pediatricians remain committed to providing accurate vaccine guidance and ensuring access to life-saving immunizations.” Rebecca Bell, MD, Pediatric Critical Care Physician, Past President, Vermont Medical Society & American Academy of Pediatrics-Vermont Chapter.

“COVID-19 vaccines are not only safe during pregnancy but also highly effective at reducing severe complications from respiratory illnesses before, during or even after pregnancy. What's so important about COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy is that it also provides passive immunity to the infant and so protects them during their most vulnerable first months of life,” said Lauren MacAfee, M.D., Obstetrician/Gynecologist, Vice President, Vermont Medical Society.

“Physicians and provider organizations should understand the changed legal risks associated with ordering COVID-19 vaccinations for healthy individuals who are under age 65. Providers can adapt their workflows to manage risk, but they need to understand how HHS policy changes created these new risks,” said John H. Wallace, J.D, Shareholder, Primmer Piper Eggleston & Cramer

Follow-Up Resources:

[Recording of 9.19 press briefing](#)

[VDH HAN Respiratory Virus Vaccine Guidance](#)

[Standing Order for Administration of Vaccine](#)

[AHIP Statement on Vaccine Coverage](#)

[AAP Recommendations for Covid-19 Vaccines in Infants, Children and Adolescents](#)

[ACOG COVID-19 Vaccination Considerations for Obstetric–Gynecologic Care](#)

[The AAFP’s Recommendations for Fall Immunizations](#)

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About the Vermont Medical Society: The Vermont Medical Society is the leading voice of physicians in the state and is dedicated to optimizing the health of all Vermonters and the health care environment in which Vermont physicians and physician assistants practice medicine. The Society serves its 3,100 members through public policy advocacy on the state and federal levels, as well as by providing legal, administrative and educational support, producing a rich flow of news and information and offering member benefits that increase medical practice effectiveness and efficiency. For more information, visit www.VTMD.org