

Boosters Vital as New Bedford Sees More Than 360 COVID-19 Cases per Day, Test Positivity Near 30%

With the city averaging 365 new cases of COVID-19 per day over the past two weeks and the test positivity rate at 29.9 percent, booster shots remain critical, along with vaccines, masks, and social distancing. More than 55 percent of New Bedford residents are fully vaccinated, but only 19.5 percent of residents have received a booster, well below the statewide booster rate of more than 46 percent.

Boosters are critically important for eligible people – those who completed their vaccinations two months ago, for Johnson & Johnson; five months ago, for Pfizer; and six months ago, for Moderna – as immunity from vaccines can wane. Booster shots can reduce risks of hospitalization and severe illness, and are particularly important given the omicron variant, which may be more likely to evade immune responses.

While Pfizer boosters have been approved for teens 12 and older, younger age groups in New Bedford have the lowest rates of booster shots. Less than 10 percent of residents 12 to 29 years old have received a booster, and just 14 percent of residents 30 to 49 years old. More than 46 percent of residents 75 and older and 47 percent of residents 65 to 74, however, have received the vital support to initial vaccines, according to state data.

Free, walk-up COVID-19 clinics in New Bedford offer CDC-approved booster shots, in addition to first- and second-dose vaccines and, at most locations, pediatric vaccines and boosters for teens 12-17. Please bring your vaccination card

when getting a booster.

Visit vaxnb.com for updated schedules of local COVID-19 vaccination and testing locations. Upcoming vaccine locations in New Bedford include:

Saturday, Jan. 22:

Andrea McCoy Recreation Center (181 Hillman St.) – 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Pfizer, Moderna, J&J, boosters, vaccines for children 5 – 11, boosters for teens 12-17

Sunday, Jan. 23:

Workers Community Center / Centro Comunitario de Trabajadores (1534 Acushnet Ave.) – 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Pfizer, Moderna, J & J, boosters, pediatric vaccines for children 5 – 11, boosters for teens 12-17

Monday, Jan. 24:

Andrea McCoy Recreation Center (181 Hillman St.) – 2 p.m. to 7 p.m., Pfizer, Moderna, J&J, boosters, vaccines for children 5 – 11, boosters for teens 12-17

Wednesday, Jan. 26:

Cape Verdean Veterans Memorial Hall (561 Purchase St.), – 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., Pfizer, Moderna, J&J, boosters, vaccines for children 5 – 11, boosters for teens 12-17

Thursday, Jan. 27:

William Taylor Elementary School (71 Portland St.) – 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., Pfizer, Moderna, boosters, vaccines for children 5 – 11, boosters for teens 12-17

Friday, Jan. 28:

PAACA (360 Coggeshall St.) – 1 p.m. to 5 p.m., Pfizer, Moderna, J&J, boosters, w/ pediatric vaccines for children 5 – 11 years old & boosters for teens 12-17

Reminder on the importance of vaccinations, especially during winter months: Vaccination levels in the region remain low,

and daily case rates remain high. Getting vaccinated for COVID-19 is not only about protecting yourself – it's also about protecting your family, friends, and community. Vaccination is critically important during the winter months, when indoor gatherings can lead to super-spreader events, clusters, hospitalizations, and severe illness among people who are unvaccinated.

State Resources for Vaccine Records, Locations

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has free online services to find your personal vaccine records and local vaccination locations, including many pharmacies.

Access your vaccine records at <https://myvaxrecords.mass.gov/>, and find local listings at <https://vaxfinder.mass.gov/>.