



Iowa Health Care Association  
Iowa Center for Assisted Living  
Iowa Center for Home Care

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## **COVID-19 vaccination program for long-term care remains on track; *Vaccine education and administration next key milestones***

Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds announced yesterday that the COVID-19 vaccination program for long-term care (LTC) is on track to begin Dec. 28. The program will run over the next few months through a partnership with three federally approved pharmacies. These pharmacies will administer the two-dose vaccine to residents and staff at Iowa's nursing facilities and affiliated assisted living communities.

"We appreciate the Governor and her team acting quickly to ensure the LTC vaccination program remains on schedule. We have work that remains to be done, but the end is in sight. The vaccination process marks the beginning of the last leg of this journey," said Brent Willett, president and CEO of the Iowa Health Care Association (IHCA). "The focus now is on vaccine education and administration. By working collaboratively with our pharmacy, state and federal partners, we will accomplish these last milestones on our journey to reuniting those in long-term care with their loved ones."

The administration process for the vaccine requires two doses before it becomes fully effective, with a waiting period between doses of 21 days. The distribution of the first dose is scheduled to begin the week of Dec. 28. It will take three to four weeks to administer the first dose to Iowa's more than 25,500 nursing facility staff and over 19,000 residents. The administration of the second dose is expected to begin Feb. 2 and run through early March.

At the same time, vaccine education efforts are underway for long-term care staff and residents. The IHCA, in partnership with the Iowa Society for Post-Acute and Long-term Care Medicine, has developed educational materials for care providers, staff and residents, to address frequently asked questions with answers from Iowa medical professionals, the FDA and CDC. IHCA encourages long-term care staff and residents to make an informed decision and discuss any questions about the vaccine with their medical care provider.

"COVID-19 has been especially unrelenting to those in long-term care. The vaccine is our best defense against it and the only way to ultimately defeat it. The more people in long-term care settings who are vaccinated, the stronger our defense becomes and the closer we get to victory over it," added Willett.

### **About the Iowa Health Care Association**

The Iowa Health Care Association (IHCA), along with its affiliates the Iowa Center for Assisted Living (ICAL) and Iowa Center for Home Care (IHC), is an integrated statewide association serving organizations that provide post-acute health care to improve the lives of Iowans, including nursing facilities, assisted living, residential care, senior living communities and home health agencies.

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