

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Educators and Coronavirus/COVID-19 –

Vaccinations for Educators

After the COVID-19 vaccine was approved for use, I heard that educators would be given priority to receive the vaccine. It seems like we were for a little while and now we are months away from being vaccinated. What is going on?

Educators were placed in vaccination group “1b” behind all health care workers and residents and staff of long term care facilities. According to Tennessee Department of Health information, several counties were vaccinating educators according to that designation but then the priority changed at the request of Governor Lee. See Note on slide 3 of the Tennessee Department of Health Clinical Webinar January 15 found [here](#).

“A few counties are in 1b and that was before GBL [Governor Bill Lee] asked that we vaccinate 75+ and then 70+ before moving to that phase.”

TEA’s Position Statement on Vaccinations

MAKE EDUCATORS A PRIORITY! VACCINATE EDUCATORS FOR SAFER SCHOOL CONDITIONS

Everyone wants safe, undisrupted, in-person instruction. Throughout the pandemic, we have been left wanting more from state leaders. The Lee administration sent us cheap cloth masks that didn’t protect us and inadequate amounts of cleaning supplies. The Lee administration has not properly funded our public schools, leaving us to spend our own funds to purchase disinfectants and protective masks on top of the hundreds of dollars we spend in a normal year on classroom resources. The Lee administration has not provided sufficient guidance on COVID outbreaks, leaving it to us to set and enforce mitigation efforts in our schools. Where in-person instruction has resumed, educators have been infected at higher rates than the communities they serve.

We can greatly reduce the constant disruption for students, educators and families by prioritizing educator access to the COVID-19 vaccine. Tennessee appeared to be on its way to prioritizing vaccines for educators, but then changed course, while still demanding all schools return to in-person instruction.

Governor Lee, you must do everything in your power to get educators vaccinated as quickly as possible. You must be transparent on timelines and doses, and publish your statewide plan on educator vaccination. Tennessee students, educators and families are counting on you to step up.

[ADD YOUR VOICE TO MAKE EDUCATORS A PRIORITY FOR THE VACCINE!](#)

Gov. Lee, we ask you to do the right thing – prioritize vaccine access for educators.