VA MANILA COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATES

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**MANILA VA OUTPATIENT CLINIC**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS AND REMINDERS**

July 9, 2021

**QUICK UPDATES:**

1. VA Manila is currently offering COVID-19 vaccines to all eligible Veterans on a scheduled appointment basis only. If you’d like a vaccine, see scheduling information below and follow one of the three easy steps. **Don’t miss your opportunity to get your COVID-19 vaccine – call us and get scheduled today!**
2. VA Manila is open for weekend mass vaccination clinics on several upcoming Saturdays and Sundays.
3. Non-Enrolled Veterans can complete this form [[SAVE LIVES Act Vaccination Registration Worksheet.pdf](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.knowva.ebenefits.va.gov%2Fimg%2Fhrc%2FSAVE%2520LIVES%2520Act%2520Vaccination%2520Worksheet.pdf&data=04%7C01%7C%7C52fc6d412c91498bbe2008d942766966%7Ce95f1b23abaf45ee821db7ab251ab3bf%7C0%7C0%7C637613898684746285%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=ZNDI4bg3JUf2dDjVhSKpTPQ5rxJgPmIbJWxSBqZ3yWk%3D&reserved=0)] and email it to ManilaCOVIDVaccine@va.gov to expedite the enrollment process. Please wait 3 business days after submitting the form by email before calling the Clinic to schedule your vaccine appointment.
4. Veterans in the Philippines who have received 1 dose of Sinovac are eligible to receive 1 dose of Johnson and Johnson COVID-19 vaccine after a waiting period of 28 days. Veterans who have received 2 doses of Sinovac are considered fully vaccinated and should not receive a second COVID-19 vaccine at this time.

**COVID-19 VACCINATIONS FOR ALL VA MANILA ENROLLED VETERANS**

VA Manila began providing additional COVID-19 vaccines to all Veterans this week at the Outpatient Clinic. We are currently seeing approximately 100 Veterans during weekdays, and are scheduled to have approximately 300 Veterans receive their COVID-19 vaccine tomorrow, on our first of several weekend mass vaccination clinics that we will conduct over the next four weeks. We still have many available appointments for both weekday and weekend appointments over the next four weeks. If you are a Veteran, regardless of enrollment or eligibility status for healthcare benefits from VA Manila, it’s your turn to schedule your COVID-19 vaccine.

**When will the next round of vaccines begin?**

VA Manila resumed administering vaccines on Tuesday, July 6, 2021. This round of vaccines will end on Saturday, August 7, 2021. We will be administering vaccines every weekday between July 6 and August 6, 2021, with the target audience for weekday appointments Veterans who already have scheduled clinic appointments on those days. In addition to weekday vaccine appointments, VA Manila will have dedicated COVID-19 Mass Vaccine Clinics on the following Saturdays and Sundays:

Saturday, July 10, 2021   – 08:00 – 15:00

Saturday, July 17, 2021   – 12:00 – 15:00

Sunday, July 18, 2021     – 08:00 – 15:00

Saturday, July 24, 2021   – 08:00 – 15:00

Saturday, July 31, 2021   – 08:00 – 15:00

Sunday, August 1, 2021   – 08:00 – 15:00

Saturday, August 7, 2021 – 08:00 – 15:00

Please consider scheduling to come on a Saturday or Sunday. Usually traffic conditions in the Metro Manila area are much more favorable on the weekends, and we are hoping to vaccinate between 300 – 400 Veterans each of the days above. However, if you would prefer a weekday appointment, we will do everything we can to accommodate your request for a vaccine on your specific day.

\*\* *Please note, due to the high volume of Veterans that the Outpatient Clinic will be vaccinating on Saturdays and Sundays, we are asking that Veterans do not bring a companion or spouse with them to the Clinic for their vaccine appointment unless it is absolutely necessary.* With more than 300 Veterans attending vaccine appointments on the weekends, the VA will not have extra seating available for companions. If possible, these individuals should wait in the vehicle or outside in the Gazebo waiting area. Only Veterans who require the assistance of someone for mobility or other disability should bring a companion, and it should be limited to one (1) individual. Your cooperation will help to ensure a smooth and quick flow of Veterans into and out of the Clinic during our dedicated mass vaccine clinic days.

**How do I get scheduled for an appointment?**

*Getting an appointment for a COVID Vaccine is easy – follow one of these 3 steps!*

1. A dedicated phone line has been set up at the VA Manila Clinic to accommodate the high demand to schedule vaccine appointments. Veterans can contact the Manila Outpatient Clinic at +63-02-8550-3888, Press Option 2 for the Outpatient Clinic, then press 3 for COVID-19 Vaccine Scheduling. Please understand that there may be extended hold times over the next several days as we try to schedule as many Veterans as possible. The Clinic’s phone lines are open Monday to Friday from 8AM to 3PM. Additionally, the Clinic’s phone lines will be open on Saturday, July 10 from 8AM to 3PM.

1. If you would like to be scheduled on one of the upcoming Saturday or Sunday mass vaccination clinic days, you can send a Secure Message to your primary care team via MyHealtheVet with your preferred date and time. One of our staff members will get back to you to confirm your appointment.

1. You can also send an email with your preferred date and time to ManilaCOVIDVaccine@va.gov. Please include your last name, last 4 of your SSN, and your current address and phone number in your email so that we can confirm the information on file. VA Manila will send you a text message to confirm your appointment time, or an email reply if no cellular phone is on file.

**What vaccine is available?**

VA Manila will be providing the Janssen Pharmaceutical Companies of Johnson and Johnson (Janssen) vaccine to Veterans. [A link to the  Janssen / Johnson and Johnson Vaccine information page from the US Centers of Disease Control and Prevention is provided here](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/info-by-product/janssen/index.html).  This vaccine confers protection with just one-dose, rather than the two dose regimens required by the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. Using the Janssen / Johnson and Johnson vaccine will allow VA Manila to vaccinate twice as many Veterans and save many Veterans the time and expense of traveling to the Clinic twice to receive their vaccinations.

This is the only vaccine that will be available during the upcoming vaccine campaign. There will not be a choice between other US FDA approved vaccines, and VA Manila does not know if future vaccine shipments will be made available and what type of vaccines may be sent to the Clinic in the future.

All three US FDA approved vaccines are safe and effective against COVID-19 virus, and are considered highly effective against severe illness, hospitalization, and death from the Coronavirus. While some vaccines report higher levels of protection, the three vaccines have not been studied head-to-head against one another, so it is not possible to make a comparison between the Pfizer, Moderna, and Johnson and Johnson vaccines. We strongly recommend all Veterans receive a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible.

**I don’t currently receive health care benefits at the VA Manila Outpatient Clinic. Can I receive a vaccine now?**

The VA Manila Clinic will be able to begin vaccinating non-enrolled Veterans at the end of July 2021. Veterans who are not current patients and do not receive any healthcare benefits can begin scheduling a vaccine appointment on July 7, 2021, with a first appointment available on July 21, 2021. Non-enrolled Veterans can pre-register their intent to receive a vaccine at VA’s COVID-19 information page, on this website: <https://www.va.gov/health-care/covid-19-vaccine/sign-up/introduction>.

Veterans who have not previously been patients at the Manila VA Clinic will need to register as a patient at the Clinic, and this process will take approximately 10 minutes by phone. Alternatively, these Veterans can complete [this PDF form](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.knowva.ebenefits.va.gov%2Fimg%2Fhrc%2FSAVE%2520LIVES%2520Act%2520Vaccination%2520Worksheet.pdf&data=04%7C01%7C%7C52fc6d412c91498bbe2008d942766966%7Ce95f1b23abaf45ee821db7ab251ab3bf%7C0%7C0%7C637613898684746285%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=ZNDI4bg3JUf2dDjVhSKpTPQ5rxJgPmIbJWxSBqZ3yWk%3D&reserved=0) [[SAVE LIVES Act Vaccination Registration Worksheet.pdf](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.knowva.ebenefits.va.gov%2Fimg%2Fhrc%2FSAVE%2520LIVES%2520Act%2520Vaccination%2520Worksheet.pdf&data=04%7C01%7C%7C52fc6d412c91498bbe2008d942766966%7Ce95f1b23abaf45ee821db7ab251ab3bf%7C0%7C0%7C637613898684746285%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=ZNDI4bg3JUf2dDjVhSKpTPQ5rxJgPmIbJWxSBqZ3yWk%3D&reserved=0)] with the required registration information and e-mail this form to ManilaCOVIDVaccine@va.gov. Once you are registered you can contact the Clinic and schedule a COVID-19 vaccine appointment. If you e-mail this form, please wait 3 business days before calling the Clinic to schedule your vaccine appointment to allow staff time to process your registration.

**Can my spouse / caregiver / dependent be vaccinated at the same time as me?**

At this time, we continue to notify spouses and caregivers that it will likely be several more months before VA Manila is able to offer a COVID-19 vaccine to you. While the [SAVE LIVES Act (Public Law 117- 4)](https://www.congress.gov/117/plaws/publ4/PLAW-117publ4.pdf), authorizes VA to provide vaccines to non-enrolled Veterans, spouses, and caregivers, it requires that VA prioritize Veterans ahead of all other groups in the absence of a readily available vaccine supply. VA Manila is unable to provide a specific date by which we may be able to begin to accommodate individuals in these groups as authorized by the SAVE LIVES Act. Spouses, and caregivers may want to consider receiving a vaccine from any source available to you, including your Local Government Units, or Provincial/Municipality Departments of Health, regardless of the country of origin of those vaccines. This also includes individuals who are eligible to receive a vaccine through the CHAMPVA program, as well as widows and surviving spouses of deceased Veterans.

**VA Foreign Medical Program Reimbursement of COVID-19 Vaccine Expenses for Eligible Veterans:**

Veterans currently living or travelling outside the United States who are eligible for the VA Foreign Medical Program (FMP) can receive reimbursement from VA for the expenses associated with receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. VA can pay for a COVID-19 vaccine that is formally approved for use by the national health authorities of the country in which the Veteran receives the vaccine. The COVID-19 vaccine a Veteran overseas receives does not need to be authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has information about FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines: [CDC information about FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/different-vaccines.html).

Please consult the VA FMP Website for additional information: <https://www.va.gov/communitycare/programs/veterans/fmp/index.asp>.

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