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Date: May 20, 2021
To: All DCS Staff
From: Rachel Russell, Deputy General Counsel,
Subject: COVID-19 vaccinations for youth 12 and older
DCS-21-10

This administrative letter is intended to provide information to Department of Child Services (DCS) employees about COVID-19 vaccination eligibility as it relates to DCS youth who are 12 and older.

COVID-19 is defined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as “a new disease, caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus that has not previously been seen in humans.” The CDC, through the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), has approved the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for those youth who are 12 and older. The vaccination is two shots which are administered 21 days apart. DCS encourages youth to receive this vaccination.

For those youth who are post-TPR and eligible for the vaccine, DCS staff should inform the youth they are eligible for the vaccine and help them set up a vaccine appointment at ourshot.in.gov or by calling 211.

For eligible youth who are in-home CHINS, DCS staff should inform the youth’s parent(s) about vaccine eligibility so a parent/child decision can be made. If a youth wishes to receive a vaccination and the parents are not agreeable, DCS should support the youth through a court order.

For eligible youth who are out-of-home CHINS, DCS staff should attempt to locate and speak with the youth’s parent(s) to obtain consent for the vaccination. If parent(s) cannot be located, DCS can pursue a court order for the youth to receive a vaccination.

Thank you for supporting our youth and their health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rachel Russell".

Rachel Russell
Deputy General Counsel

