

# ***HEALTH BENEFITS E-NEWS***

*Department of Human Resource  
Management  
Office of Health Benefits*

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## **State Health Benefits Launches Flu Shot Program**

Getting a flu shot this year is more important than ever. The more people who receive the flu shot, the higher our community immunity levels will be, and there will be less pressure on the healthcare system from seasonal flu and pneumonia. This will ensure available capacity to meet the needs placed on the healthcare system by COVID-19.

During the 2020 -21 flu season, state health plan members may again get a free flu shot at pharmacies participating in their health plan's network.

- COVA Care, COVA HDHP and COVA HealthAware members also may receive shots at no cost from network physicians' offices and other participating providers.
- Kaiser Permanente HMO members must go to a participating Kaiser medical center.
- Optima Health members will receive flu shots at no cost from network participating pharmacies. To find participating pharmacies, call the number on the back of your ID card.
- Capitol Square Healthcare in downtown Richmond will offer free shots onsite to COVA Care, COVA HDHP and COVA HealthAware members. Kaiser Permanente members, Optima Health members, TRICARE members, waived and wage employees pay for the vaccine. Members should call the clinic in advance for an appointment at (844) 342-1791.

Visit [www.dhrm.virginia.gov/healthcoverage/flushotinformation](http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/healthcoverage/flushotinformation) to find participating providers, questions and answers on each plan and a flyer to distribute to employees. It is important that plan members call ahead to be sure the pharmacy is participating in the program and flu shots are available. An appointment may be required.

See the attached flu shot guidelines for agencies that wish to coordinate flu shots onsite with participating pharmacies. DHRM recommends that due to COVID-19, agencies choosing to offer flu shot clinics with participating pharmacies strongly consider drive through or walk up options rather than holding onsite flu shot clinics. Again, be sure that the pharmacy is participating in the Commonwealth's program before scheduling a clinic.

A pharmacy must file in-network flu shot claims through its online system. If plan members are denied coverage for the flu shot, they should ask the pharmacist to call the telephone number on the back of their ID card. COVA Care and COVA HDHP ID cards have a Pharmacy Questions number, and the COVA HealthAware cards have a Pharmacy number.

While members may receive a flu shot at a non-network pharmacy, coverage will be at the out-of-network benefit level. This means they will likely have to file the claim themselves and will be responsible for any costs over the allowable charge.

**You may send inquiries to the Office of Health Benefits mailbox at [ohb@dhrm.virginia.gov](mailto:ohb@dhrm.virginia.gov)**