

# Construction workers among phase 2 populations for COVID vaccine



## Construction workers could start to receive their COVID-19 vaccines in June after a classification of essential workers who cannot work from home was expanded to include construction.

A minor change to the Ontario government's Guidance for Prioritization of Phase 2 Populations for COVID-19 Vaccination document has big implications for construction workers.

A change to the “second group of essential workers who cannot work from home” now includes, “workers in manufacturing industries directly involved in supporting the COVID-19 response, construction including infrastructure, and other essential businesses and services where facilities are at heightened risk for COVID-19 outbreaks and spread.”

The news means all construction workers will have access to a COVID-19 vaccine, when available, and prioritized a month earlier than the general public—most likely in June.

The Ontario General Contractors Association (OGCA) was first to circulate news of the change on March 24. In a memo to industry stakeholders, OGCA president Giovanni Cautillo said the association had been working on the addition of construction workers to the second group for some time.

“The OGCA has been working closely with the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development and Chief Prevention Officer, as well as employers, other trade associations and unions, to advocate for construction to be included in Phase 2 of the roll-out,” Cautillo wrote.

On the recommendation of the Chief Prevention Officer, the association has drafted a verification template for vaccinations that employers can use to confirm workers are eligible for the vaccine. That document is being circulated to employers.

The second wave of vaccines begins next month and will initially be made available to those in what the province calls “primary priority” groups. These include adults aged 60 to 79, people with health conditions, those living in congregate living settings and high-risk areas, and COVID hot spot communities.

The second group—those essential workers who cannot work from home—are scheduled to receive vaccines in June.