



WISCONSIN CHEESE MAKERS ASSOCIATION

EST. 1891

CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Bulletin Distributed: March 4, 2021

WCMA distributes member bulletins focused on coronavirus information on Thursdays and as breaking news warrants. WCMA delivers electronic newsletters with broader content on Tuesdays. Please contact [WCMA staff](#) with any questions.

Wisconsin Launches Vaccine Registry & Hotline

The [Wisconsin COVID-19 Vaccine Registry](#) is now live. This new tool guides individuals through a questionnaire determining their eligibility for the COVID-19 vaccine and assists them with scheduling a vaccination appointment. If an individual is not yet eligible to get the vaccine, or no appointments are currently available, they will be placed on a wait-list.

The number of vaccinators currently using the registry is extremely limited; many more vaccinators are expected to be added to the system in the weeks ahead.

In addition to the online registry, Wisconsin has also opened a call center, designed to field vaccine-related questions and help individuals without internet access schedule an appointment for vaccination. Call 844-684-1064 to access this service.

Members of Wisconsin's Phase 1B population, including dairy manufacturing and processing employees, may also secure a vaccination appointment through their health care provider or via Wisconsin's Federal Retail Pharmacy Program. Wisconsin officials announced late Tuesday they are [partnering with select Kroger pharmacies](#), in addition to Walgreen's, for this program. To schedule a vaccination through these providers:

- Call 1-800-Walgreens or visit www.walgreens.com/findcare/vaccination/covid-19.
- Call Kroger's pharmacy hotline at (866) 211-5320 or visit <https://www.kroger.com/rx/covid-eligibility>.

Vaccination Eligibility Status Report

In COVID-19 bulletins delivered each Thursday, WCMA provides vaccination eligibility status reports for states in which the bulk of members operate, as well as news clips noting progress in other states.

California

- Eight key dairy counties in **California** - Fresno, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tulare - have begun broad vaccination of food and agriculture workers, including dairy plant personnel.
- Sacramento County has food and agriculture workers slated in the next tier, but no vaccination start date has been announced.

Illinois

- Dairy processing personnel in **Illinois** are eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccination now.
- A list of vaccination sites is **available online**, along with details regarding required identification.

Iowa

- Dairy processing personnel in **Iowa** are eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccination now, but they are not yet being prioritized for appointments.
- Vaccine provider information is **available online**.

Minnesota

- **Minnesota** is currently vaccinating those aged 65 or older, educators, health care workers, and long-term care residents and staff.
- Officials have placed food processing workers in the state's **Phase 1B-Tier 2** group, and expect to be able to begin vaccinating the group by the end of March.

Ohio

- **Ohio** has not yet issued guidance on when essential workers, including dairy processing personnel, will become eligible for vaccination.
- The state today launched vaccination of its Phase 2 group, including Ohioans over the age of 60.
- A comprehensive list of vaccinators in Ohio is now **available online**.

South Dakota

- **South Dakota** is now vaccinating members of its Phase D group, including those aged 65 or older and those with high-risk medical conditions.
- Essential workers, including dairy processing employees, are in the state's Phase E group, though a date has not yet been set for this group's access. State officials **currently estimate** access for this group in April.

Wisconsin

- Dairy processing personnel in **Wisconsin** are eligible to receive COVID-19 vaccination now. Appointments can be made via the Wisconsin **COVID-19 Vaccine Registry**, or through a health care provider or pharmacy.
- Vaccinators have been instructed to continue to prioritize appointments for those in the Phase 1A group, including individuals aged 65 and older.

Other States

Please see these news clips for relevant updates on vaccination eligibility in other key dairy states.

- *KHBS-TV*: [Food manufacturing workers made eligible for vaccination](#) (Arkansas)
 - *The Morning Call*: [Pennsylvania teachers move up in vaccination queue while others on the front lines feel left behind](#) (Pennsylvania)
-

U.S. Senate Begins Debate on \$1.9T Relief Package

The U.S. Senate today began its debate over the \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 pandemic relief package proposed by President Joe Biden and approved by the House of Representatives late last week. The Senate version of the relief package makes two major changes to the initial proposal, detailed below.

Direct Relief Payments

The House-backed bill provided \$422 billion for a tax rebate amounting to \$1,400 for a single taxpayer or \$2,800 for a married couple filing jointly, plus \$1,400 per dependent, with the eligibility cut-off at \$100,000 for a single taxpayer and \$200,000 for married couples. The Senate version will eliminate direct relief payments to individuals earning \$80,000 or more per year and couples earning \$160,000 or more per year, meaning that 9 million fewer Americans would receive aid.

Minimum Wage Raise

The Senate version strikes a House-backed provision to raise the minimum wage to \$15 by June 2025.

Other Package Elements

The Senate package retains the following provisions approved by the House:

- \$7.25 billion for the Paycheck Protection Program
- \$25 billion to support restaurants and bars hurt by the pandemic
- An extension of expanded federal unemployment benefits, offering a \$400 per week boost over current state offerings
- An increase in the federal child tax credit to \$3,000 for each child aged 6-17 and to \$3,600 for each younger child
- \$46 billion to expand COVID-19 testing and contact tracing
- \$14 billion to expedite distribution of COVID-19 vaccines
- \$130 billion in aid to K-12 schools to reduce class sizes, facilitate social distancing, and install ventilation systems
- \$40 billion for colleges and universities
- \$350 billion to state, local and tribal governments to offset tax base hits and support pandemic-related initiatives

Democrats are aiming to complete work on the package before March 14, when many supplemental unemployment programs are set to end.

CDC Post-Vaccination Guidance Expected Soon

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is [expected to release new guidance](#) for those who have been vaccinated within the next

few days.

Politico reported earlier this week that the CDC guidance would advise that those who had received a full course of vaccine could socialize with other vaccinated people in small groups in the home without masks, but that use of face masks and social distancing would still be advised for vaccinated people when in public.

The CDC has already advised that the vaccinated population **no longer needs to quarantine** following close contact with a person infected with COVID-19.

Coronavirus Headline News

Wisconsin

- *Wisconsin Public Radio:* **Evers says schools might need summer classes, early start to recover from pandemic**
- *WMTV-TV:* **COVID-19 UK variant cases skyrocket in Wisconsin**

National/International

- *Associated Press:* **Biden says U.S. expects enough COVID-19 vaccine for all adult Americans by end of May, two months earlier than anticipated**
 - *New York Times:* **A welcome logistical challenge for states, as more vaccine arrives**
 - *CNN:* **COVID-19 vaccines could be available to the general public in April, Fauci says**
-

Visit [WisCheeseMakers.org](https://www.wischeesemakers.org) for More Resources

WCMA's coronavirus resources page on [WisCheeseMakers.org](https://www.wischeesemakers.org) is updated daily, featuring information on employee safety, regulatory flexibility, operations guidance, federal and state support, and salutes to your critical, essential staff.

WCMA Key Contacts

Members with pandemic-related questions or concerns should feel encouraged to contact WCMA staff at any time. Here are ways to get in touch.

- WCMA Executive Director John Umhoefer:
jumhoefer@wischeesemakers.org or 608-225-7130
- WCMA Communications, Education, and Policy Director Rebekah Sweeney: rsweeney@wischeesemakers.org or 608-386-3012