



To: Ohio EMS providers, EMS agencies, and EMS medical directors
From: Carol A. Cunningham, M.D., FAAEM, FAEMS
State Medical Director
Date: August 21, 2020
RE: Vaccination Administration by Ohio EMS Providers

Vaccination is a critical action to prevent the acquisition and spread of disease. In Ohio, our EMS providers have repeatedly demonstrated that we are a vital sector of the healthcare system.

I am happy to inform you that the State Board of Emergency, Medical, Fire, and Transportation Services (EMFTS Board) passed the following motion on August 19, 2020:

The Board recognizes that EMS certificate holders are permitted to administer vaccinations so long as the route of administration is within the scope of practice and the certificate holder administers the vaccine pursuant to medical direction and training on the specific vaccine, which includes adherence to the recommendations and instructions of the Food and Drug Administration.

As highlighted by the current COVID-19 pandemic, our healthcare system resources are finite. Initiatives that prevent avoidable hospitalizations, including immunization against infectious diseases, enhances the surge capacity of our hospitals. This fall, the influenza season will intersect with the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Although Ohio's public health emergency was declared due to the COVID-19 virus, an influenza outbreak would most certainly hamper our healthcare systems' response to the pandemic and decrease hospital bed capacity.

The EMFTS Board's motion will allow all EMS providers to administer the influenza vaccine according to the requirements and parameters stated. If developed, it will also allow EMS providers to administer a COVID-19 vaccine. In the future, our nation may be threatened by a different set of pathogens; however, this action taken by the EMFTS Board has ensured that Ohio EMS will be authorized to participate in the imperative public health mission of vaccination administration.

Thank you for your dedicated service to the State of Ohio and to Ohio EMS. As part of your mission to stay safe and healthy, please get vaccinated!