



## *Developing Current and Future Leaders*

### **MSFCA FAQ Sheet for COVID Vaccine**

#### **Are Minnesota Firefighters able to receive the vaccine on the priority list?**

YES! The Minnesota fire service is in the 1A or 1B categories. IF you hold an EMS license through the EMSRB at any level, you are in the 1A category.

#### **Where do I go to get the vaccine?**

Your local county health department is in charge of the dispensing of the vaccine once they receive it through the Minnesota Department of Health. Contact your local county health department to find out when you might be receiving the vaccine.

#### **Am I or my family required to take the vaccine?**

We understand everyone has a choice, and we also understand we all have different personal and medical conditions that may impact our vaccine choice. With that in mind, we encourage our “front line workers”, firefighters, to receive the vaccine.

#### **Are the vaccines safe?**

Any vaccine utilized by the State of Minnesota must have the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) or formal approval for safe use. The COVID-19 vaccines went through all of the requirements set forth in the 3 phase trials required for FDA approval. It is important to discuss the vaccine with your family medical care provider if you have concerns related to the vaccine.

#### **Am I getting the “live” virus?**

No. The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are what’s called messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccine. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), mRNA is used to trigger to an immune response in the body without exposing the individual to the live virus. The mRNA triggering the immune response for COVID-19 allows for the body to create the antibodies before the virus enters the body.

#### **How many doses will I need?**

The vaccine is a two-shot series which needs to be given 21-28 days apart, depending on which vaccine you receive on the initial dose. One of the decision points of getting the vaccine should be based on an individual’s availability for the second dose.

#### **Are there side effects from taking the vaccine?**

During the three-phased studies for both vaccines, there were some individuals who reported mild side effects which were similar to the flu. The greatest side effects were pain at the injection site and fatigue. If you are interested in receiving the vaccine, the MSFCA COVID-19 Taskforce strongly encourages you to read the vaccine information sheets to fully understand any potential risks and/or side effects.

#### **If I choose to not receive the vaccine now, can I get it later?**

Yes. It will depend on availability at the time you request the vaccine.

