



Supporting North Carolina's Vaccination Efforts Toolkit for Partner Organizations

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Tested, safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines are helping North Carolinians get back in control of our lives and back to the people and places we love. North Carolina's goal is to vaccinate as many people as quickly and fairly as possible based on available vaccine supply. Currently, the demand for vaccines vastly exceeds the limited supply.

Promoting equitable vaccine distribution and acceptance involves earning trust and meeting people where they are. NCDHHS has developed this toolkit for partner organizations to provide guidance on how organizations can support North Carolina's vaccination efforts.

Earning the Trust of North Carolinians

The injustices that drive the disparate impact of COVID-19 on historically marginalized populations (HMP)¹ can also cause very legitimate reasons for members of the community to have questions about vaccines. That is why NCDHHS are working to partner with trusted leaders and organizations to provide accurate information to communities. NCDHHS is committed to earning the trust of North Carolinians related to the COVID-19 vaccine and beyond, and building upon already established relationships.

1. Share information about the COVID-19 vaccine

- **Direct community members to YourSpotYourShot.nc.gov** (English) or Vacunate.nc.gov (Spanish) for trusted, reliable information.
- **Use the [NCDHHS COVID-19 vaccine communications toolkit](#)** to make sure all North Carolinians have accurate and up-to-date information on the vaccine.

¹ HMPs are individuals, groups, and communities that have historically and systematically been denied access to services, resources, and power relationships across economic, political, and cultural dimensions as a result of systemic, durable, and persistent racism, discrimination and other forms of oppression. HMPs are often identified based on their race (Black/African American, American Indian), ethnicity (LatinX/Hispanic), social economic status, geography (rural), religion, language, sexual identity (LGBTQ+), and disability status.



- **Encourage everyone to use these [tips when talking about the COVID-19 vaccine](#):**
 - Talk with people about the vaccine even before they are eligible to receive it
 - Be patient and respectful of those who may have concerns about the vaccine and address misinformation by sharing key facts. See our [Frequently Asked Questions](#).
 - Listen and respond to questions.

2. Become a vaccine ambassador

- **Attend a NCDHHS COVID-19 Vaccine 101 presentation** to learn more about the vaccine, then share accurate information about the vaccines with your networks.
 - Register [here](#) for presentations offered in English from NCDHHS with live Q&A
 - Register [here](#) for presentations offered in Spanish from NCDHHS with live Q&A
- **Demonstrate trust in the safety and effectiveness of the vaccines:**
 - Share positive experiences of getting vaccinated against COVID-19—use our **tip sheet** ([English](#), [Spanish](#)) to create and share a video to promote vaccination.
- **Stay up-to-date on the latest vaccine information** by sharing the NCDHHS Frequently Asked Questions page with your networks ([English](#) / [Spanish](#)). This FAQ is updated weekly.
- **Continue to practice and promote the importance of the 3 W's (wear, wait, and wash) before and after vaccination to slow the spread of COVID-19 by:**
 - Posting graphics on your organization's social media channels (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc) ([English](#) / [Spanish](#))
 - Posting signs in Buildings ([English](#) / [Spanish](#))
 - Airing PSAs through local radio stations ([English](#))
 - Playing video PSAs in meetings or in lobbies ([English](#) / [Spanish](#))

3. Host virtual town halls about the COVID-19 vaccines

- **Host a virtual town hall for community members about the vaccines.**
- **Request NCDHHS leaders to present vaccine 101 information with live question and answers at virtual town halls.** Request a presentation for your organization using this [form](#).
- **Invite local leaders to share information about the COVID-19 vaccines.** For example: invite prominent faith leaders who have received the vaccine to share with others in the faith community their reason for getting vaccinated and their positive experience with others.

Meeting People Where They Are

This pandemic has shed light on the pervasive impacts of social and structural inequities in our health systems. The same conditions that have resulted in the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on historically marginalized populations, including access to health care, are also barriers to vaccine access.



We are working with partners to overcome those barriers, and meet people where they are to increase equitable access to COVID-19 vaccinations. All North Carolina vaccine providers are expected to distribute vaccines in a way that reflects the proportion of historically marginalized populations (HMP) in a given county or region. To achieve that goal, community organizations that serve historically marginalized populations can play several important roles: helping people find their spot to get vaccinated, partnering with vaccine providers to reach historically marginalized populations and to host or support community vaccine events, and providing transportation.

1. Help people find out when and where they can get a vaccine

There are several reasons why it can be challenging to know when and where it's possible to get a vaccine: supply is very limited, the process for scheduling an appointment is different for each provider, and providers may be relying on online scheduling tools that not everyone can access.

Organizations can:

- **Help people “find their spot” to get their shot by sharing the following online tools:**
 - **Find My Group**: This helps people learn what vaccine group they are in. They can also get notified when North Carolina moves to the next group.
 - **Find a Vaccine Location**: With this tool, North Carolinians can enter their ZIP code or current location to find nearby vaccine providers. They can contact vaccine providers directly to schedule an appointment or get on a waitlist.
- **Tell people they can get information about the COVID-19 vaccine by calling the COVID-19 Vaccine Help Center at 888-675-4567.**
 - The Help Center is open Monday-Friday 7am-7pm and Saturday-Sunday 8am-4pm.
 - Help center staff can answer general COVID-19 vaccine questions and provide information on eligibility groups, how to find vaccine locations, and transportation to vaccine sites.
 - The COVID-19 vaccine help center supports English (and Spanish calls in the near future), and TTY. A language line is available for other languages needed.
 - Callers can request a call back instead of waiting in line for an agent if their call is not answered immediately.

2. Partner with local vaccine providers to help reach historically marginalized populations

Vaccine appointments are filling up very quickly because there are not currently enough vaccines available for every eligible person to receive one. North Carolina has distributed vaccines to providers in all 100 counties, including most hospitals and health systems, many community health centers, all local health departments, some pharmacies (including some Walgreens locations), and some primary care providers. NCDHHS recommends that vaccine providers prioritize scheduling eligible individuals from historically marginalized populations (HMP) at their vaccine clinics. Providers can open appointments first to HMP groups or hold a certain amount of appointments for HMP groups.



Organizations can:

- **Find out which providers have vaccine in your community.** You can learn which vaccine providers are near you by visiting [Find a Vaccine Location](https://myspot.nc.gov) (myspot.nc.gov) and entering your zip code. You can contact the vaccine provider by phone or through their website.
- **Educate and recruit community members from historically marginalized populations for these prioritized vaccine appointments.** This could include working with vaccine providers to get individuals from historically marginalized populations scheduled for a vaccine clinic or event. For example, your organization could (1) collect lists of eligible individuals from historically marginalized populations who want a vaccine, (2) work with the vaccine provider to match them to available appointments, and (3) notify the individual of their appointment time.
- **Compile a waiting list of individuals from historically marginalized communities who want a vaccine and are eligible to receive the vaccine.** In partnership with vaccine providers, call individuals on the waiting list first when vaccine is available.

3. Host a community vaccine event in partnership with a local vaccine provider

Community organizations can play an important role in hosting community vaccine events in places that are accessible to and trusted by individuals from historically marginalized populations. Ideally, organizations that want to host a vaccine event can provide “everything but the vaccine” – that is, providing the physical location and volunteers for all non-clinical roles (e.g., scheduling appointments, parking/traffic control, greeting, check-in, check-out). A particularly important role organizations can play is ensuring that people are scheduled for every available vaccine dose and confirming those appointments in advance.

If your organization is interested in learning about what it may take to host a vaccine event or support another organization’s vaccine event, please review the checklist in [Appendix 1](#). This checklist includes recommendations for organizations that may wish to (1) host a vaccine event or (2) contribute a facility, volunteers, or equipment to support another organization’s vaccine event.

If your organization can meet most of the recommended items in the checklist, we encourage you to complete the [Survey for Organizations Interested in Hosting or Supporting a Vaccine Event](#). The results of this survey are shared with vaccine providers who are encouraged to reach out directly to organizations to form partnerships. Please note that submitting the survey does not guarantee that a vaccine event will happen. The ability of vaccine providers to form partnerships and host partnered vaccine events is largely dependent on vaccine supply. Please recognize that until sufficient vaccine supplies are available, there will be more demand than supply allows.



4. Provide transportation

Access to transportation is an important element for equitable distribution of vaccines.

- Vaccine providers will ask individuals if they need assistance getting to the vaccination site.

Organizations can help people safely get to and from vaccination appointments by:

- Making a list of community members needing transportation
- Arranging transportation for those with difficulty getting to the vaccine event by contacting your [local transit agency](#)
- Publicizing information about local transit agencies to community members who may need help with transportation to and from vaccination appointments. Funding has been made available to local transit agencies to help provide this support.
- For those organizations serving older adults or the elderly, specifically individuals 65+, coordinate with either your local transit agency or with your existing contracted transportation provider.

Appendix 1. Checklist for Hosting or Supporting a Vaccine Event

- This checklist includes recommendations for organizations that are interested in (1) hosting a vaccine event or (2) contributing a facility, volunteers, or equipment to support another organization's vaccine event. For organizations that are interested in hosting a community vaccine event, it is recommended they can provide "everything but the vaccine" – where the organization provides the facility, volunteers, and equipment. Other organizations may want to contribute some resources (e.g., offer their facility, offer volunteers, offer equipment) but not handle all the logistics. We welcome organizations that wish to support either way!
- The items in the checklist are recommendations, not requirements. An organization may still be able to support vaccination efforts even if they are not able to meet all the recommendations in the checklist.
- NCDHHS has developed a survey for community organizations that are interested in contributing volunteers, facilities, equipment, or other resources to support vaccination efforts: [Survey for Organizations Interested in Hosting or Supporting a Vaccine Event](#).
- Advance planning in partnership with a vaccine provider is very important to the success of a community vaccine event.
- In most cases, vaccine providers (i.e., hospitals, local health departments, etc.) will staff the following components of vaccine events: registration in COVID-19 Vaccine Management System (CVMS), vaccine storage and handling, vaccine administration, post-vaccination monitoring, and data entry. Vaccine providers may also guide/support other activities as needed.



Offering a Location/Facility for Proposed Vaccine Event

- Location is trusted and easily accessible to historically marginalized communities
 - Identifying locations for community vaccine events that are trusted and easily accessed by individuals from historically marginalized populations, such as churches, other faith-based settings, schools, or community centers. Organizations can help promote vaccine equity by focusing on locations that are accessible to people with low incomes, people who may not have personal transportation, and people who may not have strong internet access.
- Location can host at least two vaccine events (one for first doses, followed by another event for second doses 3 to 4 weeks after the first dose event)
- Location is accessible via public transportation (if not, it is recommended that an organization work to arrange or facilitate transportation for community members who need it)
- Location is available during extended work-hours to help seniors that may rely on transportation from family members and other individuals working traditional business hours
- Location is wheelchair accessible
- Location has at least 2,500 square feet
 - Please note: FEMA estimates 2,500 square feet is the minimum square footage needed to administer about 250 doses per day. An organization may be able to host an event with less than 2,500 square feet but it may be less throughput than 250 doses per day. It is not required to have 2,500 square feet to host a vaccine event.
- Location has at least 130 spaces of onsite parking (please note, your organization may still be able to host even if less than 130 spaces of parking)
 - Please note: FEMA estimates 130 parking spaces are needed for staff and vaccine recipients for an event that is providing 250 doses per day. This also varies on whether the event is a drive-thru or a fixed site. It is not required to have 130 parking spaces to host a vaccine event.
- Location has running water, electricity, heat/air conditioning
- Location has working toilets and handwashing stations (portable rentals if indoor facility is not close)
- Location has wireless internet
 - Accessing Wi-Fi can be crucial for the medical partner to register patients, whether through expanded network near the vaccine site or adequately powered hotspot.
- Location has reliable cell phone service
- Location can accommodate a one-way in, one-way out traffic pattern
- Location has at least 20 tables and 40 chairs
 - Note: It may be possible to host smaller event with less than 20 tables
- For groups that are helping to get elderly individuals vaccinated, it is recommended to have:
 - Chairs with two arm rests for people to prop themselves up
 - Wheelchairs for people who may have difficult with mobility



Contributing Volunteers for Staffing Proposed Vaccine Event

Please note: *Volunteers and vaccine providers will need to coordinate on the activities listed below. This may include training or planning sessions.*

- Volunteers who can compile waiting lists of eligible individuals to be able to share with a vaccine provider for upcoming clinics or events
- Volunteers who can schedule vaccine appointments for a proposed event
- Volunteers will need to work with the vaccine provider to determine best approach to schedule on behalf of others (e.g., pen and paper, by phone, online, etc.)
 - For example, one vaccine provider (a health system) gave iPads to pastors to schedule members of their congregation. Many organizations may be able to provide support for scheduling vaccines prior to a vaccine event.
 - Volunteers can print event tickets with time/date of vaccine slot and distribute to people who are eligible to receive vaccine.
- Volunteers who can call and confirm appointments prior to the vaccine event
- Volunteers who can greet people, take temperature, and screen for symptoms of COVID-19
 - Local organizations are a good source of volunteers with familiar faces to greet people and put them at ease.
- Volunteers who can help direct people to parking and provide traffic control
- Volunteers who can help with check-in and confirm appointment when people arrive at vaccination site
- Volunteers who can help with check-out and scheduling of 2nd dose
 - Volunteers can schedule people for their 2nd appointment before they leave the site after vaccination. Volunteers can help with check-out by handing out masks, handing out flyers for resources, sharing other resources with people before they leave (emphasizing the **3Ws of Wear Wait Wash**, resources like **Hope4NC** mental health supports).
- Volunteers who can serve as interpreters for individuals for whom English is not their first language
- Volunteers who can serve as American Sign Language interpreters for individuals who are deaf or hard-of-hearing
- Volunteers who can bring food or bottled water for vaccinators and volunteers
- Volunteers who can be runners/floaters to help with miscellaneous tasks that are needed at the vaccination site
- Volunteers who can attend trainings that led by vaccine providers (as needed)
 - It is recommended that volunteers/staff review NCDHHS Frequently Asked Questions to be able to consistently answer questions related to vaccines:
<https://files.nc.gov/covid/documents/COVID-19-Vaccine-Update.pdf>

Clear Identification of Vaccination Site Staff

Note: Volunteers should be easily and clearly identified. Without a standardized identification (could be as simple as a colored sticky name tag on the chest), it is difficult to tell who is there to be tested and who is a volunteer since everyone has different face coverings. Clear identification keeps the



environment safe for privacy (if not well identified, others can access areas intended only for staff) and makes it easy for people presenting for vaccination to know who can answer their questions.

For some communities, law enforcement presence and fear of authorities may deter people from coming to a vaccine event. Avoiding highly uniformed staff and wearing more casual street clothes creates a safer- feeling environment at times. Additionally, it is recommended that law enforcement know the location of the event and be close by if needed, but not visibly onsite.

Contributing Equipment for Proposed Vaccine Event

- Vehicles and drivers to help with transportation support
 - This can include organizing carpools or large group transportation to and from vaccination sites (e.g., through minivans, buses), especially for community vaccine events.
- PPE for volunteers (e.g., disposable masks, face shields, hand sanitizer)
- Tables
- Chairs
- Golf carts (to help transport individuals, especially if parking lot is far from vaccination site)
- Traffic cones (to help manage traffic flow and to help keep 6-foot distance marks)
- Sign boards
- Wi-fi hotspots
- Heaters
- Outdoor lighting (especially if the event is outdoors, or taking place while it is dark outside)
- Heavy-duty tents (if the event is outdoors)
 - Shelter in the form of several secure, heavy-duty tents to endure heavy wind, rain and sun; cover the medical team, health department educators, etc., and their electronics; and provide adequate space to social distance. You should plan on at least one tent for each workstation including the traffic monitors and patient monitoring stations.
- Generators
- Portable toilets (if not restrooms indoors)
- Food and beverages (e.g., bottled water, coffee, pastries, lunch delivered to site) for volunteers and vaccinators



Resources that may be available to supporting organizations:

- **PPE**

- Volunteers who are not administering vaccine should be wear a face covering, but otherwise do not require specific or special PPE.
- Organizations that are hosting vaccine events or contributing volunteers for vaccine events [can request face coverings](#) using the [Non-Health Care PPE request form](#). Please note that requests will be fulfilled as quantities are available.
- Vaccine providers are responsible for supplying PPE for their staff, including clinical vaccinators.

- **Vaccinations**

- Volunteers supporting vaccination efforts are eligible to get vaccinated as part of [Group 1](#). Please work with your local vaccine providers to discuss how to get volunteers vaccinated.

- **Potential Reimbursement**

- In federally-declared disasters, FEMA can provide funding and technical help to state and local governments and certain private, non-profit groups.
- Please reach out to your local emergency management and vaccine providers as you are planning community vaccine events to discuss questions about potential reimbursement from FEMA.
- Please visit the [NC DPS Public Assistance webpage](#) for more information.