

Strategies to Fill COVID-19 Vaccination Appointments

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DEVELOPING PARTERSHIPS
Prior to allocation

PLANNING: FILLING APPOINTEMENTS
Once allocation is confirmed

PRE-EVENT COMMUNICATION
Fill any appointments that remain 1-3 days prior

DURING THE EVENT
Continue to fill appointments, and respond to no-shows

Developing Partnerships and Planning

1. **Develop partnerships with local organizations and employers to help fill appointments.** While providers are ultimately responsible for filling appointments quickly and equitably, a community organization can be an important partner in achieving these goals.
 - a. **See a list of organizations that have already volunteered to help support vaccine events [here](#)**
 - b. Consider partners with strong ties in your communities such as faith-based organizations, [Local NAACP chapters](#), local [HBCUs](#), [Community Health Workers](#), [homeless shelters](#), partners that serve homebound persons (e.g. homebound health providers, Meals on Wheels, senior living), and other community based organizations (e.g. local United Way, food pantries, etc), community civic clubs (e.g. Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions clubs), and local colleges or universities.
 - c. Work with employers to vaccinate their employees.
 - i. Contact a NCDHHS case manager to find out if an employer near you needs vaccinations.
 - ii. Reach out directly to local employers, local [school systems](#), [charter schools](#), and [private schools](#), Local [chambers of commerce](#), or organizations serving farmworkers, such as [farmworker health clinics in NC](#), [NC Cooperative Extension Offices](#), [AMEXCAN](#), [NC Field](#), [North Carolina Migrant Education Program](#), [East Coast Migrant Head Start](#)
2. **Host vaccination Q&As with community partners or employers** to address questions and concerns people may have before booking appointments. Key resource: [Vaccine 101](#).

3. As you plan your vaccine event, consider how to make the site easily accessible. Choose a trusted familiar location and include weekend and evening hours. If the event is accessible through public transportation, publicize those options, [use free funding](#) for public transit, and use free rides through [Ride United NC](#).
4. Support language access to your event.
 - i. Offer bilingual scheduling. The [state scheduling tool](#) is available in both English and Spanish.
 - ii. **Include bilingual staff or volunteers from partner organizations** to help interpret for patients for whom English is not their first language.
 - iii. **Partner with local organizations** who can help promote the event in different languages, and/or provide bilingual staff or volunteers to help with the event.
 - iv. **Ensure signage is clear and in multiple languages** about where to enter, stand in line, etc.
 - v. Contact communication.access@dhhs.nc.gov if you need help connecting with language access resources

Planning: Filling appointments

5. Make it easy for people to find your clinic and schedule appointments

- a. Have an easy way to schedule appointments online. **You can use the CVMS Scheduling tool for free, which is available in both English and Spanish.** See instructions [here](#).
- b. Give clear instructions on how to sign up for appointments or show up for walk-ins. Include those instructions in all of your communication, outreach, and promotional materials.
- c. Be clear about when you're scheduling for first doses, and when you're scheduling for second doses.
- d. **Make sure you are listed on the statewide vaccine site locator (Myspot.nc.gov).** To add yourself to the site locator or edit any information, see the instructions [here](#)

6. Promote your clinic or event on social media, websites, and via local businesses and media outlets (local news channels, e-newsletters).

Use communications resources from the [Communications Toolkit](#) to get you started.

- a. You can send a tailored text or email blast out about your event to the [DHHS Vaccine ListServ](#) in your county, which is a listserv of people who have signed up for vaccine updates, or through your [local health department](#) to promote your event to persons who are already listed in the state contact tracing software.
- b. **NCDHHS will make customized materials to promote your event.** Request them using [this link](#).

7. Work with Partners to schedule appointments

- a. Work with trusted community partners, particularly among historically marginalized populations to reach out to their networks and book appointments. Partners can:
 - i. Schedule appointments – share access to your scheduling tool or create a dedicated scheduling link for partners to use. Tell partners how many slots you are trying to book.
 - ii. Promote appointments – ask partner organizations to text, call, or promote the available appointments in-person. You can create flyers, or draft emails or texts for them to distribute to their networks.
- b. Reach out directly to **employers** that you have partnered with to schedule appointments
- c. Work with the employer to register workers to get vaccinated, as many workers cannot call to make an appointment.

8. Make a Standby list to fill appointments in the case of cancellations or no-shows

- a. If you fill appointments before the date of the event, **open up a “standby list”** and gather peoples contact information. You can use this list to fill appointments if people had to cancel or didn’t show up. Invite individuals, employers, local businesses, or community organizations who were unable to get an appointment or scheduled at a later date to be on the standby list.

Pre-event communication: Filling appointments that are still open

9. Push out information about the vaccine event including the link or phone number to schedule appointments again—**let people know that there are available appointments.**

- a. Notify local partners and give them a text, flyer, or email they can use to notify their networks that appointments are available.
- b. Contact people registered for appointments and encourage them to bring a friend.
- c. Call radio stations and local newspapers in your area—ask if they will promote the event. Many will be able to promote or even send DJ’s to your vaccine location for free, or minimal cost.
- d. Contact DHHS to send out a text or email blast to their Vaccine ListServ. The listserv has more than 770,000 contacts on it and can be filtered by county. To request an email or text fill out [this form](#)

10. Contact people and organizations on the standby waiting list to notify them that there are appointments available to ensure no doses are wasted.

During the Event

11. Ensure people are not turned away

- a. Do not request people show a government-issued ID like a driver’s license. Providers should not turn away individuals who cannot show identification. this can be a barrier to some historically marginalized populations like persons experiencing homelessness, immigrant populations, and older minority populations
- b. **Add people to the standby list** if a person comes to the event and does not have an appointment and there are not slots available. Check every hour to see if you have no shows, so you can allow someone without an appointment to get their vaccine.

12. Consider promoting that you are taking walk-ups and be staffed appropriately to handle walk-up traffic.

13. Schedule second dose appointments (if needed) before individual leaves the vaccine clinic.

