



Vaccination Events in Congregate Settings: A Checklist

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Vaccination events hosted at shelters and locations frequented by people experiencing homelessness provide the opportunity to vaccinate individuals who may find it difficult or are hesitant to access medical services in traditional settings. Strategies to vaccinate people experiencing homelessness are more effective when developed in partnership with public health authorities, healthcare providers, and local Continuums of Care (CoCs). As always, follow public health guidance and vaccinate individuals in accordance with local policies. Below is a sample checklist of action items for homeless service providers planning an onsite vaccination event.

In planning with your CoC and public health/healthcare/pharmacy partner for the event, be sure to:

- ☐ Know who the healthcare point of contact will be for the vaccination event.
- ☐ Plan and communicate the roles and responsibilities of all parties for the day of the event.
- ☐ Confirm what vaccine types will be available and who will be eligible. If only a subset of people can be vaccinated, identify clients in advance who meet specific criteria.
- ☐ Work with public health partners to look up people's immunization history in the local immunization information system to know what vaccines should be given and when.
- ☐ Identify the list of supplies (i.e., vaccine kits, personal protective equipment [PPE], emergency response supplies) that will be needed, which partner will be responsible for bringing which items to the event, and what type of storage space (if any) is needed during the event.
- ☐ Determine which shelter staff will be responsible for the [cleaning/disinfection protocol](#).
- ☐ Ensure there are procedures in place in case of allergic reactions to a vaccine (i.e., anaphylaxis) and determine who will contact emergency services, if necessary.
- ☐ Engage in contingency planning (e.g., if you plan to hold the event outside, have an alternative location identified in case of inclement weather).
- ☐ Establish a post-vaccination observation area and identify the healthcare staff who will monitor individuals immediately after receiving a vaccine and respond to any side effects.
- ☐ Establish an after-hours protocol for clients to report symptoms that occur post-vaccination.

Communicate clearly with your community regarding the upcoming event; be sure to:

- ☐ Reach out to your culturally specific community partners to engage them in planning considerations for vaccinating Black, Indigenous, and other people of color (BIPOC).
- ☐ Mobilize trusted community partners of color to publicize the event.
- ☐ Connect with your community partners to collect and distribute snacks, refreshments, and [incentives](#).
- ☐ Be sure people are maintaining infection control measures while eating and drinking (e.g., physical distancing, handwashing, individually packaged food, etc.).
- ☐ Determine how faith-based partners can strengthen support for the vaccination event.
- ☐ Post clear, simple, and translated information in advance of the event, including the date, time, location, and what to expect.

In planning with your staff and clients in preparation for the event, be sure to:

- ☐ Walk through the event with staff to discuss the healthcare partner's role, how staff will be involved, and which staff will receive a vaccine during the event.
- ☐ Decide how shelter staff will be easily identifiable during the event (e.g., same color t-shirt).
- ☐ Train staff to respond to clients' questions about the vaccination event.
- ☐ Train and deploy [Vaccine Ambassadors](#) to begin talking with clients about the vaccination event.
- ☐ Train staff on delivering trauma-informed services in ways that respect historical trauma grounded in racism throughout the planning and implementation of the event. Bring in expertise for training, if needed.

- ☐ Plan for the shelter to be open and available to anyone who has been vaccinated and may need rest. Set an expectation that the regular shelter schedule will not be followed (e.g., clients may rest instead of having to leave the shelter or apply for jobs).
- ☐ Consider having case management and/or behavioral health providers available during the vaccination event to effectively respond to any special needs or triggered responses a vaccine might produce.
- ☐ Remind everyone to continue using PPE per the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) guidance](#).

In planning for side effects or other moderate symptoms post-vaccination, be sure to:

- ☐ Review CDC information that provides [post-vaccination expectations](#).
- ☐ Remind everyone that side effects are normal and expected; side effects demonstrate that the vaccine is working.
- ☐ Make space available for clients to rest and recuperate post-vaccine.
- ☐ Have medical staff available to monitor recipients for 15 minutes after vaccination.
- ☐ Expect some clients to request a night in a hotel or motel if they have moderate side effects and be able to offer this as needed.

In planning for data collection, be sure to:

- ☐ Review [Homeless Management Information System \(HMIS\) privacy policies](#).
- ☐ If using HMIS to document vaccinations, ensure privacy policies outline data uses and disclosures.
- ☐ Discuss what information will be collected by your public health partner, how this will be collected, and what assistance clients may need during the data collection process.
- ☐ Plan a procedure with public health to vaccinate individuals even if some data are unavailable or the patient declines to release information.
- ☐ Identify the staff person responsible for data collection during the event.
- ☐ Determine a private space within the event location that can be used for data collection.
- ☐ Engage in contingency planning (e.g., if online systems will be used, ensure there are hot spots available in case of internet outages and have paper forms printed out as backup).

On the day before the event, remember to:

- ☐ Take a deep breath—there will be bumps along the way.
- ☐ Trust your public health partner on their vaccine administration expertise and work together in a coordinated fashion.
- ☐ Reiterate to staff that flexibility is key and contingencies should be expected.

Learn more about vaccination events:

1. [Vaccine Clinic Planning Activities](#)—This CDC resource can be used to help shelters as they discuss staffing plans, locations, and the unique needs of the people experiencing homelessness served by the shelter with healthcare partners.
2. [Off-Site Supply Checklist](#)—This CDC resource lists supplies that may be needed during a vaccine event. It is also recommended that the checklist be used in conjunction with [your state or local public health](#) supply checklist.
3. [V-safe](#)—This system allows people to complete post-vaccine health checks to monitor for adverse impacts of vaccination.
4. [COVID-19 Vaccine Fact Sheet](#)—This CDC resource contains easy-to-understand explanations about COVID-19 vaccines.
5. [Vaccine Confidence Communication Checklist](#)—This CDC resource can be used to develop a plan to communicate with staff and shelter residents in advance of vaccine events to increase confidence in COVID-19 vaccines.
6. [Immunize.org](#) (formerly Immunization Action Coalition)—This website provides helpful resources on all types of vaccines, including handouts available in multiple languages.