

Partners for Local Governments in the Distribution of the COVID-19 Vaccine

From partnering with states and counties on distribution, to ensuring that Black, Indigenous and other residents of color have access to the vaccine – local leaders need every resource at their disposal to meet this challenge head on. By leveraging expert resources and private partners, local leaders can move faster towards the goal of immunizing their communities. A vigorous vaccination program will accelerate the time when residents can get back to their pre-pandemic lives, allow cities to rebuild their economy and is critical to mitigate the spread of new, more infectious and potentially more deadly variants of the coronavirus.

Drawing on Health Experts

Local leaders have been on the front lines of addressing the COVID-19 pandemic from day one by making the difficult decisions to implement public health measures that helped to save lives. Many of them either drew on the expertise of their own ranks or looked to the health experts in their local communities to inform their policy making. By partnering and trusting expert guidance, local leaders can best serve their residents in the new phase of the pandemic – vaccine distribution. Here are some trusted resources for vaccine distribution information:

- [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) is a critical resource for the latest information about COVID-19 vaccine resources. They provide toolkits, suggested messaging, and online learning opportunities for local leaders to stay up to date on the COVID-19 pandemic and vaccination effort.

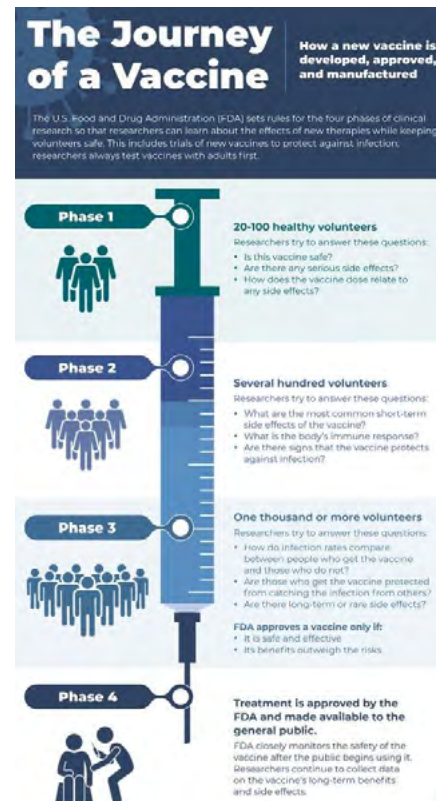
- [Resources on building vaccine confidence](#)
- [Resources on the specific types of vaccines](#)
- [Guidance on making a strong case for vaccination](#)
- [Information on the Federal Government's Partnership with Retail Pharmacies](#)

- The Rural Health Information Hub has a wealth of [resources on COVID-19 innovations in rural communities](#).

- The [National Institutes of Health](#) has important resources to help you understand the process of vaccine studies, as well as resources for how to message to the public about the safe use of vaccines.

- [Your state and local health departments](#) are important resources for local leaders about the vaccine. Each state has a rollout strategy being implemented by local health departments. While some cities have authority over their health departments, many do not. Despite not having formal authority, you can reach out to your county and state health departments and find ways that you can support their efforts.

- [Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health](#) is a national expert in public health and has been providing valuable insights since the onset of the pandemic ranging from helpful FAQs to in-depth analysis. Their vaccine resources can help you recognize and stop the spread of misinformation, understand the importance of acting quickly to get the population vaccinated, and many other topics. While this university is a valuable source of national information, your local higher education institution, college of public health, or medical school could be a valuable partner in helping to craft, hone, or implement your local vaccine strategies.



Addressing Disparate Impact

The need to draw on every resource has never been more evident as city officials work to try to address the ongoing disparate impacts of COVID-19 on Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color (BIPOC). Communities hit the hardest by COVID-19 tend to have a larger BIPOC population to begin with – yet they have lower access to vaccines. To help combat these disparities, local leaders can address the stigmatization of BIPOC communities in the American healthcare system that has led to such large distrust and access issues for this population.

Currently, there is lack of a unified effort from each state in targeting the limited distribution of vaccines to BIPOC communities. Local officials can work with community-based organizations who have long-standing relationships with BIPOC and at-risk communities. The following resources will help city officials take intentional steps to encourage confidence in and access to the COVID-19 vaccine for Black, Indigenous and other communities of color:

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has a [vaccination by race dashboard](#) that local leaders can use to understand disparity in vaccination rates.

- The [National League of Cities](#) recently hosted a town hall with [Dr. Oscar Alleyne](#), Chief of Programs and Services at the National Association of County & City Health Officials focused on equity, communications, and protection in COVID-19 distributions. Both Dr. Alleyne's presentation and the full recording are available.

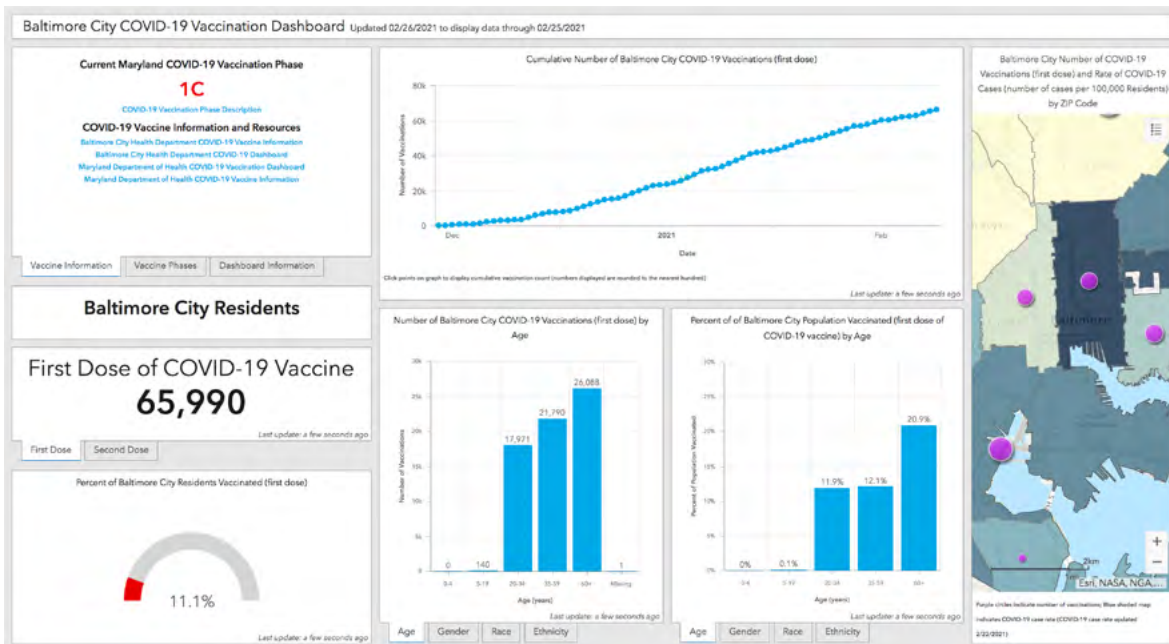


- The [National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine](#) have a number of resources about the importance of equity in vaccine distribution, and in the American medical system. Additionally, the group released a [consensus study](#) advising policy makers in the US and global health communities on how to achieve more equitable allocation of COVID-19 vaccines.
- The [NAACP has created a resource page](#) containing helpful resources about vaccine distribution strategies, as well as research and resources about the full impact of the pandemic on Black people.
- The CDC Foundation has a website with [resources for Community-Based Organizations](#), many resources on this page are available in Spanish.
- UnidosUS has put together a [bilingual digital toolkit](#).
- AAPCHO has multilingual resources for health centers and community-based organizations that serve Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities on their [website](#).

Private Sector Partners

In the private sector there are a variety of resources city leaders can tap to develop a robust vaccine distribution plan. For more information or to get in touch with these partners, please reach out to the NLC Partnerships team at sponsorships@nlc.org.

- [Google](#) is highlighting vaccination sites in Search and Maps in coordination with partners like VaccineFinder.org and other authoritative sources. They are adding vital details for each vaccination site, such as whether an appointment is required and if it has a drive-through to Search and Maps, as well as showing state and regional distribution information on Search so people can easily find out when they are eligible to receive a vaccine.
- [Esri](#) has a number of tools focused on GIS and mapping. They have comprehensive dashboards for cities that include the status of vaccination deployment broken down by demographics, region, etc. They have a 5-step plan for governments to use for vaccine distribution, including identifying facilities, prioritizing populations, analyzing gaps, managing inventory, and communicating with residents. An example of the [City of Baltimore's vaccine dashboard](#) is below.



- [The Grant Access program](#), which is a NLC Savings and Solutions program, offers NLC members free access to an easily searchable grants database for local governments. There are a number of COVID-19 related grants on the database, including some that could be used to aid in vaccine distribution efforts.

Conclusion

This pandemic has brought unique challenges to every community. Partnership is essential. Collaboration amongst public and private sector leaders, following health expert guidance, and clear and transparent communications are vital to get sufficient numbers of Americans vaccinated to reach herd immunity as equitably and speedily as possible.

Appendix & Extra Resources

- [NIH COVID-19 Vaccination Communication Resource](#)
- [CDC Guidance on Vaccine Clinics](#)
- [HHS Vaccine Safety Information](#)
- [Johns Hopkins Vaccine Safety Information](#)
- [FDA Vaccine Safety Surveillance Information](#)