

*Resources and assistance to support
HUD's community partners*

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How CoCs Can Start Vaccine Distribution Planning

Continuum of Care (CoC), Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG), and Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) funded providers should participate in local and state discussions around vaccination planning to ensure that people experiencing homelessness are vaccinated in a timely manner. Providers' participation in these discussions is an eligible activity under each of these funding streams. For more information about aligning these resources to engage in vaccination activities, tune in to the [HUD SNAPS COVID-19 Planning and Response Office Hours](#) on **January 8, 2021**.

An important reminder as we begin preparing for vaccine distribution: COVID-19 has amplified the historic and current racial biases and discrimination embedded in our systems, processes, and practices. It is part of our work to ensure that we achieve our goals in ways that do not create barriers for the people we serve.

Many partners are developing guidance to support individuals experiencing homelessness access vaccines. HUD has activated technical assistance provider teams to provide additional support to communities in planning and preparing for vaccine distribution. We also encourage recipients to look for and address racial inequities during each step of vaccine distribution planning efforts.

- The National Health Care for the Homeless Council (HCH) has prepared the [Vaccines for Patients and Staff](#) issue brief to begin to educate the provider community. You can view the recording of the [COVID-19 & the HCH Community: Vaccines for Clients and Staff](#) webinar that discusses this brief.
- Each state has developed an [Interim COVID-19 Vaccination Plan](#) that prioritizes groups based on risk including people experiencing homelessness.

The HUD Exchange will soon feature materials on the [COVID-19 Homeless System Response: Vaccine Planning and Distribution page](#) that will provide up-to-date resources, including a communications toolkit, that can be shared in your communities.

It will be important that CoCs and homeless service providers are able to answer questions asked by people experiencing homelessness, provider staff, and community partners. To prepare, please start with the three steps below:

1. Review your State's Vaccination Plan

Each state has a [vaccination plan](#) which prioritizes groups based on health risks. Review the plan and document any concerns or critical issues that should be discussed with public health partners who are responsible for vaccine distribution. Are people experiencing homelessness explicitly identified in the roll out phases? Are people in unsheltered locations represented?

2. Begin Planning with the Right Public Health Partners

Contact local public health authorities to determine who is responsible for vaccine planning and coordination and ask to be included in the planning

process. Seek more information about local prioritization and roll out plans.

3. **Assure Priority Vaccine Access for Essential Staff and People Experiencing Homelessness**

Continue to educate public health authorities about the need to prioritize essential staff and people experiencing homelessness for the vaccine who are at high risk of COVID-19 exposure, transmission, and severe illness. This aligns with [federal prioritization principles](#) and the federal government's [December 2020 memo](#) which designate staff and management of outreach programs, homeless shelters, and other programs sustaining human life as essential.

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