

FEMA Supports COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Amid Winter Weather Response

FEMA continues to support vaccine distribution efforts, including the opening of the first Community Vaccination Center in California, while responding to the recent winter storms and urging individuals and families to prepare for additional winter weather.

Acting FEMA Administrator Bob Fenton is attending the opening of the first Community Vaccination Center in California today – at California State University in Los Angeles. The center is focusing on vaccinating underserved and historically marginalized communities. Another pilot Community Vaccination Center is also opening today in Oakland, California. Both centers are designed to administer up to 6,000 vaccines a day. FEMA is providing resources, operational and federal staffing support.

FEMA has now obligated more than **\$3.38 billion** to states, tribes and territories, and Washington, D.C., for community vaccination centers. As the number of states with obligations increases, we will work alongside other federal agencies to provide federal support for critical staffing, supplies and other shortfalls that can help get more people vaccinated.

Winter Storm Preparedness

- Even as we continue working on vaccination distribution support efforts, FEMA maintains its mission readiness in supporting a variety of disasters, including recent snowstorms. A major winter storm is spreading from the Southern Plains into the Northeast through Tuesday, with a large area of snow, sleet and freezing rain expected. Significant travel disruptions are expected, and power outages are occurring as winter weather extends from south Texas into Maine.
 - Families and individuals should take disaster and emergency preparedness seriously.
 - Pay attention to weather reports and warnings of freezing weather and winter storms, and stay off the road during and after a winter storm.
 - Be prepared for winter weather at home, at work and in your car. Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning, have a carbon monoxide alarm in place and only use generators and grills outdoors and away from windows.
 - Visit [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) today and [make a plan](#) for what you and your family can do to stay safe during a disaster.



FEMA

- An [Emergency Declaration](#) was approved for Texas on Feb. 14, which provides emergency protective measures for mass care and sheltering and direct federal assistance under the Public Assistance program. This assistance is for all 254 counties in Texas.
- Last week, [FEMA, and the state of Texas announced](#) the launch of a pilot project to establish community vaccination centers in Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston. FEMA will provide resources, operational support and federal staffing support to establish these new centers, which are expected to be open to eligible members of the public beginning Feb. 24.

Vaccine Distribution Key Messages

- Everyone has a role to play in increasing vaccinations. Support your family, friends and neighbors if they [need help getting appointments](#) or getting to a vaccination center.
 - You can help those without access to technology or those with low computer literacy to sign up online.
- The pilot Community Vaccination Centers in Los Angeles and Oakland, California are scheduled to open today. The centers are designed to administer up to 6,000 vaccines a day. FEMA is providing resources, operational support and federal staffing support.

Federal Funding to Accelerate Vaccine Efforts

- Providing funding to states, tribes and territories is an Administration priority. After a request is submitted, reviewed, and validated, FEMA can expedite reimbursement for eligible emergency work projects to ensure resources are available to support vaccine distribution and administration.
- As of Feb. 15, FEMA has provided more than **\$3.38 billion** to 33 states, the District of Columbia, three tribes and three territories for expenses related to COVID-19 vaccination at 100% federal cost share.
- These [funds cover critical supplies, staffing, training and transportation needs](#) that support increased vaccination efforts.
- The costs of purchasing the vaccine and support kits are not covered by these obligations and do not duplicate any HHS funding. COVID-19 Vaccines and support kits are provided to state, tribal and territorial governments at no cost by the federal government.
- By law, FEMA funding cannot duplicate costs covered by other federal funding programs or initiatives. FEMA works closely with other federal agencies to provide information about the eligible use of various COVID-19 funding resources. As part of the FEMA Public Assistance program application process, applicants must certify that assistance is not being duplicated.
- The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2021 appropriates \$2 billion to FEMA to provide financial assistance to households for COVID-19-related funeral expenses at a 100% federal cost.

- FEMA is finalizing an interim policy and will be hiring [contract support](#) through the federal acquisitions process to help administer the program.
- As of Feb. 15, the Disaster Relief Fund balance is more than \$12.9 billion. These funds will support continued response to COVID-19, including expanded vaccination efforts across the country by providing financial assistance to governments and other eligible applicants for vaccination efforts as well as personal protective equipment, alternative care sites and durable medical equipment.

FEMA and Other Federal Agencies Are Supporting Vaccination Centers

- FEMA is seeking bids to contract medical personnel to help staff both federally supported and community vaccination centers around the country.
 - The contracts will be awarded through the [federal acquisition process](#) and are expected to be completed by mid-March.
 - Local and community-based hospitals, state-managed centers as well as federally supported and federally managed centers would receive staff from these contracts exclusively for vaccine support.
- FEMA has finalized a contract for 30 mobile vaccination units; inspection and delivery of initial production is in progress.
- As of Feb. 15, FEMA has deployed 1,279 staff across the nation to support vaccination centers with federal personnel and technical assistance. A National Incident Management Assistance Team has deployed to Albany, New York to support the state's vaccination program.
- One FEMA Corps team is supporting the Region 2 regional response coordination center. Additional FEMA Corps teams are at the Kentucky Emergency Operation Center to provide Kentucky residents information on vaccination locations and the [Commonwealth's vaccine website](#). Additionally, AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) teams are supporting a vaccination center in New Jersey.
- FEMA published a [Community Vaccination Centers Playbook](#) that establishes guidance for providing federal support to state, tribal and territorial Community Vaccination Centers. Information includes interagency coordination, resource support, facility setup and other requirements.
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is supporting future planning for community vaccination centers using their subject matter experts, alongside FEMA and state assessments teams, to assess potential new site locations and provide contract capability for establishment
 - USACE is also coordinating with FEMA and the CDC to design walk-up, drive-through, and mobile vaccination centers. Vaccination center size and location are decided by state, local, tribal and territorial governments.
 - The intent of these designs is the use of existing infrastructure when available.

- The U.S. National Guard Bureau is providing 1,201 vaccinators to 385 vaccination centers in 43 states and territories.
- Additionally, 714 interagency vaccinators have deployed to Arizona, California, Nevada, New Jersey, Navajo Nation, Oklahoma and Texas.
- Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin approved 1,110 active duty troops to support five vaccination centers. FEMA will be partnering with the Department of Defense for additional resources at vaccination centers throughout the country.

Ensuring Equitable Vaccine Access

- To address and prevent COVID-19 health inequities and ensure an equitable response to the pandemic, the Biden administration [announced a task force](#).
- FEMA is committed to ensuring every person who wants a vaccine can get one.
- FEMA and the CDC are working with state, local, tribal and territorial governments on the critical need to identify vaccine center locations that ensure vulnerable and under-served populations have access to vaccines.
- FEMA has civil rights advisors and disability integration specialists in each of FEMA's regions to advise state, local, tribal and territorial governments and other partners. Additional disability integration advisors and civil rights advisors are deploying to support these efforts.
- FEMA established a Civil Rights Advisory Group to proactively consider and promptly resolve civil rights concerns and help ensure equity in the allocation of scarce resources including future vaccine allocation.
 - This group evaluates policies, practices, strategies and plans to ensure equity is at the forefront of all FEMA vaccination efforts across the country.
- FEMA developed a Civil Rights Checklist to assist state, tribal and territorial partners in understanding and fulfilling their obligations to provide access to vaccine-related programs, activities and services in a nondiscriminatory manner.
- FEMA Disability Integration specialists and advisors are deployed to ensure the needs of people with disabilities are integrated in all facets of vaccine center operation.
- The agency is also analyzing community demographics and coordinating translation and interpretation services.

Community Vaccination Center Pilot Partnerships

- The sites FEMA is piloting in locations such as California, New York and Texas are selected based on data analysis including the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index and other Census data as well as input from our state and local partners.

- Vaccines for these centers are provided to the states above and beyond the regular allocations. The additional vaccines are made possible through increases in production and availability.
- We are working to do the most good, for the most vulnerable populations, with no impact to the current allocations of vaccines to the states.
- Last week, [FEMA, and the state of Texas announced](#) the launch a pilot project to establish community vaccination sites in Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston. FEMA will provide resources, operational support and federal staffing support to establish these new centers. The centers are expected to be open to eligible members of the public beginning Feb. 24.

Vaccine Guidance

- According to CDC, as of Feb. 15 more than 54.2 million vaccine doses have been administered. More than 70 million vaccine doses have been distributed to locations across the country.
- CDC has released updated guidance on how people can [make sure their mask works the best it can](#), such as wearing a cloth mask over a medical mask. The CDC worked with the Ad Council to produce [public service announcements to encourage and normalize the consistent use of masks](#).
- The CDC is hosting a virtual [National Forum on COVID-19 Vaccines](#) for representatives from state, local tribal and territorial leaders, healthcare practitioners and community, education, media and private sector leaders who are part of the vaccination efforts.
- The Forum will convene people from across the country who are part of vaccination efforts to:
 - Advance the goals of the [National Strategy for the COVID-19 Response and Pandemic Preparedness](#).
 - Ensure information is exchanged about innovative strategies and promising practices to promote effective and equitable vaccine administration.
 - Use data to drive vaccine implementation and respond to gaps.
 - Increase expertise and respond to states' and jurisdictions' needs for practical resources on how to best administer vaccine equitably, safely, and quickly to as many people as possible in communities across the country.
- The CDC Vaccine Task Force and Data Analysis & Visualization Task Force launched the CDC COVID Data Tracker [Vaccinations Trends page](#). This page includes the overall trends of vaccinations over time in the US and for the Federal Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care Program.
- Additionally, the CDC Vaccine Task Force is rolling out vaccine confidence consultations for interested jurisdictions. To request this service, interested jurisdictions can send an email to confidenceconsults@cdc.gov. CDC also has [online tips for building vaccine confidence](#), and a [Strategy to Reinforce Confidence in COVID-19 Vaccine](#) resource.

- FEMA is working with the [Ad Council to encourage hesitant or underrepresented people to get vaccinated](#). This research-driven public education campaign provides federal, non-profit and medical stakeholders with insights and communications strategies to tailor communications to reach diverse audiences.
- The vaccine is not a perfect fix. Everyone should continue to [practice other precautions](#) like wearing a mask, social distancing, handwashing and other hygiene measures until public health officials say otherwise.

Additional FEMA Support

- FEMA, through its National Response Coordination Center and 10 regional offices across the nation, is coordinating with other federal agencies to meet state, tribal and territorial needs as requested. Support includes expedited financial assistance, federal equipment and supplies, and deploying federal personnel to states, tribes, territories and other eligible applicants for vaccination efforts at a 100% cost share.
- Additionally, FEMA will provide reimbursement to states, local, tribal and territorial governments and the District of Columbia for the use of their National Guard at a 100% cost share until Sept. 30.
- On Feb. 2, [President Biden directed FEMA to retroactively reimburse states for 100% of their costs for eligible emergency protective measures](#) including masks, gloves, emergency feeding actions, sheltering at risk populations and mobilization of the National Guard.
- President's directive also [directs FEMA to expand the activities eligible for reimbursement for work conducted after Jan. 21, 2021 and until Sept. 30, 2021](#). Reimbursement applies to eligible costs to support the safe opening and operation of eligible schools, child-care facilities, healthcare facilities, non-congregate shelters, domestic violence shelters, transit systems and other eligible applicants incurred after Jan. 21.

Contact Us

If you have any questions, please contact FEMA Office of External Affairs:

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Also, follow Acting Administrator Bob Fenton on Twitter [@FEMA_Fenton](#).

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Helping people before, during, and after disasters.