



Vaccine Planning and Distribution: Roles and Responsibilities

Public health authorities are responsible for preventing the spread of communicable diseases in all populations. However, developing an effective vaccination strategy for people experiencing homelessness will require the coordination of many partners including homeless systems, public health and emergency management departments, and community stakeholders.

COVID-19 vaccines, which are currently being distributed to states, present a critical opportunity to shield people experiencing homelessness (PEH) from contracting the virus. Effective and equitable vaccine distribution among this population requires contributions from critical community stakeholders in order to:

- Ensure access to the vaccine for all PEH.
- Build a network of trusted health care providers who can administer the vaccine.
- Track vaccination at the individual level to ensure that PEH receive the required two doses of the vaccine.
- Meaningfully engage with and inform staff and PEH to increase trust and willingness to get the vaccine and integrate PEH into vaccine distribution planning.
- Ensure essential staff and PEH are prioritized for the vaccine who are at high risk of exposure, transmission, and severe illness.

Below is a chart of key roles and responsibilities for homeless system partners.

Partner	Role
Continuum of Care (CoC) Lead/Homeless Sector Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inform state/local public health vaccine rollout and prioritization plan for PEH• Elevate critical needs and concerns to public health authorities related to vaccine access and distribution for PEH• Convene homeless services providers, public health partners, PEH, and health care providers to design effective vaccine campaigns• Engage PEH and consumer groups to design effective communication and equitable vaccine planning and rollout strategies at the local level• Develop community engagement strategies for Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) who have been historically mistreated by the medical establishment• Communicate clear and accurate public health information to providers and PEH• Identify diverse partners who are known and trusted healthcare providers of BIPOC and LGBTQ communities and PEH; consider Health Care for the Homeless clinics, Federal Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), local university clinics, mobile outreach clinics, and behavioral health partners• Track and monitor data
Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG) Administrator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure subrecipients are connected to local vaccine planning• Support expedited service delivery and be responsive to subrecipients' needs (e.g., advance grant funds, provide grant agreement amendments)• Utilize ESG resources to support vaccine efforts• Partner with CoCs to offer planning and coordination support to subrecipients and communities throughout the jurisdiction

Partner	Role
Service Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include PEH in planning to understand needs and barriers related to successful vaccine campaigns that is accessible to all (i.e., English as a second language, Americans with Disabilities Act [ADA] considerations, plain language) • Deploy culturally relevant and targeted community engagement strategies in partnership with encampment and shelter residents; identify vaccine ambassadors who can engage those who are hesitant to receive the vaccine • Identify diverse frontline staff and volunteers to support vaccine distribution • Partner with trusted healthcare providers who can administer the vaccine; work with PEH to build providers’ cultural competence and awareness of vaccine hesitations • Work with stakeholders (including diverse providers and PEH) to create encampment and shelter engagement protocols
Leaders with Lived Experience of Homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in vaccine distribution planning and coordination; ensure strategies are effective, equitable, and reach critical populations • Inform communications and community engagement strategies • Act as vaccine ambassadors to educate people and increase confidence in the vaccine • Engage a diverse number of other PEH in planning discussions to elicit broad perspectives
Public Health Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead vaccine distribution planning and coordination for PEH and homeless services providers • Engage with homeless service providers and people with lived experience early to inform vaccination strategies • Build a network of trusted vaccine providers; encourage providers to hire and utilize staff from historically disenfranchised (BIPOC, people with lived experience, etc.) communities to facilitate trust • Monitor and track implementation of the plan and data on vaccine allocation and inventory management • Deploy public health, risk-based communication strategies with PEH, encampment leaders, service providers
Trusted Community Partners: Faith-based communities, meal programs, library systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide targeted education and support to increase vaccine confidence by utilizing PEH and groups who are allies of people experiencing homelessness • Host vaccination events in coordination with public health partners • Participate in vaccination events • Act as vaccine ambassadors