



Resources for Faith-Based and Community-Based Organizations Fighting COVID-19

Faith-based organizations (FBOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) are playing essential roles in combating the COVID-19 pandemic. These critical community pillars are meeting the needs of the populations they traditionally serve, while also assisting millions more people who have been dealing with serious health and economic hardships caused by the pandemic. Local trusted leaders and institutions have been on the front lines of addressing people's needs, including communicating about how to keep ourselves safe during the pandemic; providing the facts about how, where, and why people should get vaccinated; and breaking down barriers for families to get the testing, treatment, and assistance they need.

The American Rescue Plan, signed into law by President Biden on March 11, 2021, is providing substantial new support, much of which can help expand these efforts. Whether it's building on work your organization is already doing or broadening your efforts to support getting every community in America vaccinated, what follows is a variety of ways that FBOs and CBOs can access funding or engage in partnerships.

It is important to note that most of the funding described in this document is being distributed through state, local, territorial, and tribal health departments, and these departments are at different stages of awarding or spending these dollars.

We strongly encourage FBOs and CBOs to work closely with local, state, tribal, and territorial partners – as well as local Community Health Centers and other public health institutions – with the understanding that each community will put Federal resources to work in unique ways and on different timelines that are shaped by local needs.

Partner with State, Territorial, and Local Health Departments

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has recently awarded billions of dollars that can be spent over the next three years to support state and local efforts to increase vaccine uptake. This includes:

- \$3 billion in funding that Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) granted to 64 jurisdictions to bolster broad-based vaccine distribution, access, and administration effort – particularly to reach underserved communities and those at highest-risk from COVID-19;
- \$332 million to support Community Health Workers – frontline public health workers who have a trusted relationship with the community and can facilitate access to a variety of services – for COVID-19 prevention and control;

- \$2.25 billion over two years to address COVID-19-related health disparities and advance health equity among populations that are at high-risk and underserved, including racial and ethnic minority groups and people living in rural areas; and
- \$250 million from the HHS Office of Minority Health to advance health literacy and enhance equitable community responses to COVID-19.

Funds across these programs can be used for various types of community health outreach, including identifying and training trusted members of the community to conduct door-to-door, phone, and text message outreach to raise awareness about COVID-19 vaccines and helping individuals sign up for appointments. Funds may also be used to support hiring community health workers who perform culturally competent bilingual health outreach so they can provide people who are receiving care with the information they need to get a free vaccination.

Community-based organizations who are interested in accessing these funds should contact their state or local health department directly for application instructions. If your organization does work in New York City, Chicago, Houston, San Antonio, or Philadelphia, your [city immunization program](#) will receive the \$3 billion for vaccine distribution, access, and administration funds directly and you should be in touch with them.

Contact information [for vaccine distribution, access, and administration funds](#) can be found [here](#).

Partner with Tribal Communities

Some of the funding described above will also be sent directly to health departments and centers in Tribal Communities. CBOs or FBOs operating in Tribal areas should contact local Tribal authorities to discuss opportunities to partner and collaborate. Additional details on the funding that has been provided to Tribes for COVID-19 response can be found [here](#).

Partner with Community Health Centers

Nationwide, nearly 1,400 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) serve about 30 million people, almost all of whom are living in or near poverty. FQHCs – also known as Community Health Centers – work closely with underserved communities, including the uninsured or underinsured, immigrant communities, limited English speakers, and communities at the highest risk of contracting or dying from COVID-19. These community anchors have been doing critical work throughout the pandemic, and now all of them have been invited to participate in the direct federal vaccination program.

The American Rescue Plan has provided substantial investments to Community Health Centers nationwide to expand COVID-19 vaccinations, testing, and treatment for vulnerable populations, and many are receiving direct federal allocations of vaccinations

to administer every week. Community Health Centers often partner with local, community-based, and faith-based organizations to conduct outreach about vaccination, to help fill vaccination appointments, to ensure that underserved populations have transportation and other support to make their vaccination appointments.

We encourage CBOs and FBOs to [reach out to nearby Community Health Centers](#) to partner in those efforts.

Partner with Area Agencies on Aging

Under the American Rescue Plan, the federal government has allocated over \$1.4 billion to 56 State Units on Aging and 622 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), and grants will be made by May 1, 2021. These grants aim to cover a range of services, including congregate and home-delivered meals, family caregiver support, preventive health services, and home and community-based services.

Typically, AAAs subgrant to local community-based organizations and faith-based organizations. To learn more about opportunities to partner, we encourage you to contact your local AAA. You can find contact information for your local AAA [here](#).

Join the COVID-19 Community Corps to Encourage Your Neighbors to Get Vaccinated

The COVID-19 Community Corps is a program of the HHS and CDC to share science-based information directly with community organizations and people across the country to empower them to deliver messages in the fight against COVID-19 and share the importance of vaccinations in their community.

Community Corps members receive weekly updates on the latest scientific and medical information, FAQs about the vaccine, social media suggestions, infographics, factsheets, and tools on ways to help people get registered and vaccinated. The Community Corps launched on Thursday, April 1 with over 275 founding members, and as of Wednesday, April 14, more than 6,000 had already signed up to participate.

To join the Corps and get real-time updates, sign up [here](#).