

COVID-19 VACCINATION CLINICS

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LABORERS'
HEALTH & SAFETY FUND
OF NORTH AMERICA

To support nationwide vaccination efforts, LIUNA District Councils, Local Unions, signatory employers and other groups may be able to offer COVID-19 vaccination clinics to make it easier for LIUNA members and their families to get vaccinated. This guidance document provides assistance related to the administrative and logistical aspects of planning these events.

Coordinating COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics

Proper planning and promotion are instrumental in coordinating a successful clinic. There needs to be enough demand among LIUNA members to warrant hosting a LIUNA-sponsored clinic instead of having members get vaccinated through a community site. If you're not sure what their preference is, ask through a short poll.

Contact Internal and External Entities

The planning process for hosting a workplace COVID-19 vaccination program should include input from labor representatives, management, health and welfare funds, employees and any other parties that may be involved. Two critical stakeholders include:

Vaccine provider

- ▶ Providers typically deliver worksite flu vaccination services and are expanding to provide COVID-19 vaccination.
- ▶ They have trained staff already available and can report vaccine administration data to immunization registries.
- ▶ They will be responsible for administering the vaccine, following all safety protocols and holding liability for the event.
- ▶ Be prepared that coordinating with the provider could be a complex and time-consuming process.

Health and welfare fund

- ▶ Discuss covering the vaccine administration fee at no cost to the member.
- ▶ If a member has coverage through the health and welfare fund, the health and welfare fund may cover the administration fee.
- ▶ If a member does not have coverage, seek reimbursement from the Health Resources and Services Administration's COVID-19 Uninsured Program.

Have you run a flu shot vaccine clinic in the past? Many of the same aspects of the planning process still apply. The main difference between the two is the availability of the COVID-19 vaccine.

Contact the local or state health department in your jurisdiction for additional guidance.

Determine Logistics

Eligibility

- ▶ Decide who will be eligible to receive the vaccine at the clinic. Options include members, retirees, spouses and dependents.

- ▶ For employers with multiple trades on a site, host a clinic and allow all eligible workers to get vaccinated.

Scheduling

- ▶ Coordinate scheduling with the vaccine provider. For example, will people sign up through an online portal on a website you host or with the vaccine provider?
- ▶ Think about Internet access and the comfort level with technology among your members or workforce. Offer assistance for people with low tech literacy.

Time and location

- ▶ Pick a time that is convenient for workers.
- ▶ Provide the vaccine during work hours, for all shifts.
- ▶ Select a clinic location that is convenient for members (e.g., near the worksite, at a union-affiliated location such as a training center). Increasing accessibility and convenience increases participation in the vaccination program.
- ▶ Ensure the location has enough space to host a clinic while maintaining physical distancing throughout the entire process, from screening to post-vaccination observation.

Develop a Promotion, Communication and Education Plan

- ▶ Vaccination clinic promotion should include information about the date, time and location as well as how to sign up and where to ask questions.
- ▶ Vaccination communication and education should address the barriers, obstacles and concerns to getting vaccinated and the benefits of vaccination for members, their families, co-workers and the community.
- ▶ Build confidence and establish trust in the vaccines with a top-down approach and an effective communication plan. Engage those in leadership positions to encourage vaccination.

Encouraging COVID-19 Vaccination at Community Sites

Even if hosting a clinic is not the best option for you, there are still steps you can take to encourage vaccination.

- ▶ Allow ample time for employees to get vaccinated during work hours or to take paid leave to get vaccinated at a community site.
- ▶ Support transportation to offsite vaccination clinics, such as paying fares for taxis or ridesharing services. Check with your health department about potential assistance, such as a mobile clinic or transportation support.
- ▶ Post information in employer and union communications about the importance of COVID-19 vaccination, as well as how and where to get the vaccine in the community.

Other COVID-19 Vaccination Best Practices

Whether you host an event or choose to have workers get vaccinated on their own, you can encourage vaccination by following these best practices.

- ▶ Provide employees with paid time off to get vaccinated and recover from post-vaccination side effects. As of April 21, most employers are eligible for tax credits for providing paid time off for workers to receive COVID-19 vaccinations and recover from getting vaccinated.
- ▶ Allow time for vaccine confidence to grow. Ask employees who are well-respected to help you build confidence in COVID-19 vaccines. Workers who are hesitant at first may become more confident after seeing co-workers get vaccinated.
- ▶ Provide opportunities for members to ask questions before getting vaccinated and to give feedback after vaccination.

COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic Case Studies within LIUNA

New York State Laborers' Health & Safety Trust Fund

The New York State Laborers' Health & Safety Trust Fund (NYSLHSF) started research on securing unallocated COVID-19 doses for eligible LIUNA members in January. The Fund decided to partner with independent pharmacies that didn't have the infrastructure to distribute the vaccine. Independent pharmacies have a seven-day window to distribute the vaccine once they receive it. The path to vaccination looks like this:

The independent pharmacy notifies NYSLHSF with the number of available doses (48-72 hours before clinic) → NYSLHSF notifies Locals → Locals contact membership through phone calls, text messages and social platforms → Eligible members register and attend the clinic.

The roles and responsibilities between LIUNA and the pharmacy are clearly defined. Pharmacy staff present the clinic, administer the vaccine, provide medical supplies and assume responsibility and liability for the event. LIUNA facilitates the event, secures the space, greets people, checks them in and does the legwork of preparing the space. The NYSLHSF picks up all costs associated with the clinic. It is an all-hands-on-deck initiative across the NYS TriFunds to promote and implement the clinic – NYSLHSF, Training, LECET, Organizing and the Locals are all involved.

Clinics are only open to those eligible to get vaccinated at the state level. At first, only retirees (age 65 and up) were eligible; over time, younger Laborers and their families became eligible in New York. Registration originally took place on the NYSLHSF website but was later moved to the independent pharmacy website to streamline the process. TriFund staff have provided technical assistance to overcome low technology literacy and acted as translators to help with a language barrier if English is not the member's primary language.

The NYS TriFunds and Locals have taken a top-down approach to pro-vaccine messaging. Videos with Business Managers explain why they're making the choice to get vaccinated. Trust is established because members know their union is there to protect them. "There's that huge sense of brotherhood and sisterhood, wanting to get back to being able to come into the Local for meetings, to do our union activities together," says Frank Marchese Jr., Executive Director of the New York State Laborers' Health & Safety Trust Fund.

According to Marchese, "the members are super appreciative and it makes all the effort and persistence worth it... You can literally see the difference between when they come in and the relief and comfort on their faces when they leave."

For more information about the NYS vaccine clinics, contact Frank Marchese Jr., Executive Director, New York State Laborers' Health & Safety Trust Fund, at fjm@nysliuna.org.

Chicago Laborers' District Council

The Chicago Laborers' District Council (CLDC) has partnered with IBEW Local 134 and Pipefitters Local 597 to join forces and offer vaccinations for members of all three unions. This gives members better access to vaccines and less competition for appointments. Planning and coordination began with the other unions and their related health and welfare funds for vaccine clinics at the beginning of March. The vaccine will be administered by UChicago Medicine Ingalls Occupational Medicine.

The clinics are a union-sponsored event, however Ingalls Occupational Medicine assumes all liability associated with vaccination. While the COVID-19 vaccine itself is available at no charge in the U.S., the administrative fee is covered by the health and welfare fund.

In the state of Illinois, vaccines are allocated through the state and then to city and county public health departments. Vaccine providers are in contact with county health departments for vaccine allocation. CDC software has been utilized to set up a registration site. The first clinics are tentatively planned for the week of April 19th at the Pipefitters' Training Center in Mokena, IL, and the IBEW Technical Institute in Alsip, IL (chosen based on their proximity to members and vaccine allocation).

Appointments will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. CLDC has established a robust, high-touch communication plan to educate members about the COVID-19 vaccine and notify members about the clinics through meeting announcements, website posting, emails and phone calls.

LIUNA, IBEW and the Pipefitters have about 55,000 members total in the area covered by these clinics and their partnership has the ambitious goal of vaccinating 15,000 people in 45 days, with two clinics each week. The reason behind the ambitious goal? As Cathy Wenskus, Administrator of the Laborers' Pension and Welfare Funds puts it, "It's about putting people back to work safely... so they can maintain a paycheck and benefits... so jobs don't get shut down because of COVID-19 exposure."

For more information about the CLDC vaccine clinics, contact Cathy Wenskus, Administrator, Laborers' Pension and Welfare Funds, at CathyW@chilpwf.com.

Additional Resources

1. LHSFNA: [Coronavirus and COVID-19 Resources](#)
2. LIUNA Training and Education Fund (LTEF): [Infectious Disease App](#)
3. CDC: [COVID-19 Workplace Vaccination Program](#)
4. CDC: [Guidance for Planning Vaccination Clinics Held at Satellite, Temporary or Off-Site Locations](#)
5. NIEHS: [Key Elements of a Model Workplace Safety and Health COVID-19 Vaccination Program](#)