

PROMOTING COVID-19 VACCINATION AT YOUR WORKPLACE

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LABORERS'
HEALTH & SAFETY FUND
OF NORTH AMERICA

This guidance document is intended to help employers survey workers about their views on the COVID-19 vaccines, understand workers' reasons for not getting vaccinated and take action to increase vaccination among your workforce. This guidance may also be useful for LIUNA Regional offices, District Councils, Local Unions, training centers and other LIUNA affiliates.

Many factors can affect someone's decision to get vaccinated. Distribute the following survey to learn more about your audience's knowledge, beliefs, motivations and barriers related to COVID-19 vaccines.

COVID-19 Vaccination Survey

This survey should be anonymous.

1. As of today, which statement best describes your COVID-19 vaccine views and behaviors:
 - a. I am fully vaccinated.
 - b. I am partially vaccinated.
 - c. I haven't gotten vaccinated yet and am still thinking about it.
 - d. I will only get vaccinated if required by my employer.
 - e. I don't have plans to get vaccinated but may change my mind in the future.
 - f. I don't intend to get vaccinated.
2. If you haven't gotten vaccinated yet, please share why (check all that apply):
 - I'm concerned about the safety and effectiveness of the vaccines.
 - I don't believe COVID-19 is a risk for me and my family.
 - I'm concerned about the side effects from the vaccine.
 - I don't know where to get the vaccine.
 - I've had trouble signing up for a vaccine appointment.
 - I'm not able to get vaccinated because of:
 - a. Transportation to the appointment
 - b. Time off work
 - c. Time away from responsibilities at home
 - Other (please write in your response): _____
3. What is the main reason you have not been vaccinated?
4. What information would you like to receive before getting a COVID-19 vaccine?

Communication Preferences Checklist

You also need to understand your audience's communication preferences. Knowing this information will allow you to reach them effectively and efficiently in ways they prefer.

- ▶ Preferred language:
 - English
 - Spanish
 - Other, please specify: _____
- ▶ Preferred communication channel (check all that apply):
 - Email
 - Website

- Social media
- Text message
- Print
- ▶ Who do you consider as trusted sources for health information? (check all that apply)
 - Employer
 - Union leadership
 - Healthcare providers
 - LIUNA brothers and sisters

Creating Tailored Messages and Materials

Focus on your audience’s “why” or motivations for getting vaccinated. Tap into emotional triggers. The reasons that drive someone’s decision to get vaccinated will always be the most compelling to them personally. For example, young adults may be less concerned about their own health, but more motivated to help prevent infection in older family members. Messages to them should emphasize protecting their loved ones.

Incorporate values that resonate with your audience. Position these values as reasons for getting vaccinated. For example, if your workforce values personal freedom, “vaccination helps you take personal control of your life and allows you to be free to live a healthy life.” Proof of vaccination may also be required at certain venues (e.g., sporting events or concerts) or to travel to certain places.

Send the message from multiple levels of the organization. Share pictures or video of workers, supervisors and management getting the vaccine. This may help build trust among workers who are open to vaccination but reluctant to be among the first in a group to get vaccinated.

Use the results of your survey to target the specific barriers most prevalent among your workforce.

Reason: *“I’m concerned about the safety and effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccines.”*

Response: COVID-19 vaccines are safe:

- ▶ COVID-19 vaccines were developed using science that has been around for decades.
- ▶ COVID-19 vaccines are not experimental. They went through all the required stages of clinical trials. Extensive testing and monitoring have shown these vaccines are safe and effective.
- ▶ COVID-19 vaccines have received and continue to undergo the most intensive safety monitoring in U.S. history.

COVID 19-vaccines are effective. They can keep you from getting and spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. The vaccines also help keep you from getting seriously ill and dying even if you do get COVID-19.

Reason: *“I don’t believe COVID-19 is a risk for me and my family.”*

Response: Here is the reality of COVID-19 in the United States:

- ▶ There have been over 35 million cases.
- ▶ Over 600,000 people have died.
- ▶ The level of community transmission across the country is high.

The Delta variant is nearly twice as contagious as previous COVID-19 variants. Unvaccinated people remain at the greatest risk. Fully vaccinated people with breakthrough infections can spread the virus to others. To protect yourself, your family and your community from COVID-19, it is in your best interest to get vaccinated. Almost 70 percent of people age 12 years and older have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose; almost 60 percent are fully vaccinated. Ninety percent of people age 65 and older have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose; 80 percent are fully vaccinated.

For more information, visit <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker>.

Reason: *“I’m concerned about the side effects of the vaccine.”*

Response: In the short term, you may have some side effects, which are normal signs your body is building protection. Common side effects include fatigue, headache, muscle aches, fever and chills. These side effects should go away in a couple of days. On the arm where you got the shot, you may experience pain and swelling. Consider getting the shot in your less dominant arm, like you would for the flu shot.

To help deal with side effects, talk to your doctor about taking an over-the-counter medication (e.g., ibuprofen or acetaminophen) afterward, apply a cool, wet washcloth where you got the shot and drink plenty of fluids.

Reason: *“I don’t know where to get the COVID-19 vaccine.” “I’ve had trouble signing up for a COVID-19 vaccine appointment.” “I’m not able to get vaccinated because of transportation to the appointment, time off work and/or time away from responsibilities at home.”*

Response: These are all legitimate barriers to workers getting vaccinated. Use the Fund’s [COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics guidance](#) document for details on how to hold a vaccine clinic at your worksite. Alternately, promote locations and hours where COVID-19 vaccines are available. Offer paid time off for workers to get vaccinated and to recover from getting the vaccine.

For workers who are having trouble making an appointment online, offer technical assistance and support so they can successfully schedule an appointment. For workers without transportation, offer a ride-sharing service free of charge or provide transportation.

Reason: *“I will only get vaccinated if required by my employer.”*

Response: Generally, employers do have the legal right to mandate their workforce to get the COVID-19 vaccine as a condition of employment. If you’re considering instituting a vaccine mandate at your workplace, check out the July 2021 *Lifelines* article, [What You Need to Know About COVID-19 Vaccine Mandates and Incentives](#).

Get Audience Input and Feedback

Even if you have a strong understanding of your audience, it’s important to get input and feedback on the messages and materials you send. Evaluate the effectiveness of your communication by re-surveying your workforce and continuing to engage in conversations with workers.

For additional resources on promoting the COVID-19 vaccines, including fact sheets and graphics, visit the Fund’s Coronavirus & COVID-19 Resource page at www.lhsfna.org/index.cfm/coronavirus. For specific questions not covered above, contact the Fund at 202-628-5465 or by email at communications@lhsfna.org.