

COVID-19 VACCINE OUTREACH GRANT PROGRAM

Program Guidelines | December 2021



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Section I – Statement of Purpose

The **COVID-19 Vaccine Outreach Grant Program** is intended to support the efforts of local organizations in Pennsylvania conducting grassroots outreach to communities about COVID-19 vaccines. The program is part of COVID-19 Vaccination Supplemental Funding to IP19-1901, and CDC-RFA-1P21-2108, “Partnering with National Organizations to Support Community-Based Organizations to Increase Vaccination Coverage Across Different Racial and Ethnic Adult Populations Currently Experiencing Disparities” through the PA Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) and the PA Department of Health (DOH) collaboration.

Organizations will work to educate their communities on the COVID-19 vaccine to improve uptake of the vaccine, and overall, the health and safety of Pennsylvania. This program will engage and provide the necessary funding to community organizations to educate their community regarding COVID-19 vaccination to address hesitancy concerns and barriers. They will provide those they are educating with information on both the vaccine, and where they can get it. The communities of priority are those experiencing disparities in vaccination, including:

- Black/African Americans
- Latinx
- LGBTQ community
- Low income persons
- Persons experiencing homelessness
- Persons less likely to use the Internet and others without Internet access
- Persons residing in rural or geographically isolated areas
- Persons who do not speak English fluently (or have limited English proficiency)
- Persons who have distrust in the government
- Persons with mental and/or physical disabilities
- Persons without a high school diploma
- Persons with underlying medical conditions (identified by CDC guidelines as high-risk conditions for COVID-19)
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- Refugees
- Undocumented immigrants (or recent immigrants)
- Youth and adolescents
- Young, mobile persons, including college students

Grants are awarded to those projects which, in the judgment of the Review Team, comply with the provisions of these program guidelines and meet all requirements of [DCED’s Single Application for Assistance](#). Applications received under this program may also be considered for funding from under other programs administered by DCED and DOH.

Section II – Eligibility

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for the COVID-19 Vaccine Outreach Grant Program include, but are not limited to:

1. Non-profit organizations incorporated under the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, including religious institutions and faith-based organizations.
2. Childcare and educational institutions, including child/daycare facilities, K-12 schools, school districts, and institutions of higher education

B. Use of Funds

Grants provided under the COVID-19 Vaccine Outreach Grant Program must be used to fund proactive, targeted vaccine outreach.

Eligible use of funds for the COVID-19 Vaccine Outreach Grant Program include, but are not limited to:

1. Local media buys, such as print, television, and radio advertisements.
2. Costs for designing and producing advertising, outreach, and training materials, including (but not limited to): videos, digital content, direct mail, print materials (stickers, posters, flyers, etc.). Materials should be created to reach people at different levels of health literacy, digital literacy, and science literacy, and must have culturally and linguistically appropriate messages.
3. Sponsorship of vaccine-related outreach events in the community.
4. Training for community liaisons and outreach workers and volunteers.
5. Equipment rentals, such as technology for vaccine appointment setting or participation. Equipment must be rented rather than purchased.
6. Event costs related to vaccine outreach and activities, which have no religious component.
7. Administrative costs of the applicant necessary to administer the grant. Administrative costs will include documented vaccine related staff expenses such as travel, letterhead, and other related costs. Administrative costs shall not exceed 2% of the grant award.

Ineligible use of funds for the COVID-19 Vaccine Outreach Grant Program include:

1. Grantee payroll or stipends
2. Gift cards, cash, or other incentives of value for individuals in exchange for receiving vaccine. This includes promotional items or “freebies” given out to the public at events.
3. Payment of existing debt obligations
4. Food and drink
5. Religious services or programming: No Commonwealth funds may be used for religious purposes or to support religious activities. Grantee must provide services and programs that are open to all, regardless of race, creed, color or religious preference.
6. Outreach activities specifically related to COVID testing.

Additional details about eligible and ineligible expenses can be found on the Frequently Asked Questions document found on dced.pa.gov/vogp.

Section III – The Application Process

A. General

1. Project applications must be submitted using the [DCED Single Application for Assistance](https://dced.pa.gov/singleapp) via dced.pa.gov/singleapp. Electronic applications will be accepted in multiple rounds. The first round will be open from 09/27/2021 through 11/01/2021. Subsequent rounds will be announced after the first round closes provided funding is still available.
2. An applicant must follow the detailed instructions for completing the [DCED Single Application for Assistance](https://dced.pa.gov/singleapp). The project description must include information including:
 - a. What do you plan to accomplish with this project?
 - b. How do you plan to accomplish it?
 - c. How do you plan to use the funds?
 - d. What vaccine-hesitant groups do you intend to reach with your outreach efforts?
 - e. What geographic areas will be served by your outreach efforts?
 - f. Will you be partnering with any other health organizations, community organizations, or vaccine providers on your outreach efforts?
 - g. Projected schedule and key milestones and dates
 - h. What is the projected end date of your grant-supported efforts?
 - i. Have you received previous funding from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for COVID-19 outreach efforts, including vaccine outreach efforts?
 - j. Are you receiving funding from other entities for COVID-19 outreach efforts, including vaccine outreach efforts?
3. The COVID-19 Vaccine Outreach Grant Program is a federally funded program. Applicants will need a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number in order to apply for funding and be registered with the System for Award Management (SAM) in order to receive funding under the program. To register for a DUNS number please visit www.dnb.com/duns-number.

B. Selection

1. Applications will be reviewed following the closing of each round. Projects will be selected based upon whether they meet the eligibility criteria and thoroughly demonstrate the project goals, objectives, and outcomes.
2. The applicant will receive an e-contract to sign electronically. Once the contract is fully executed, the applicant will receive a copy of the contract, along with an invoice/payment requisition to complete and return to DCED for payment. The applicant must maintain full and accurate records with respect to the project. DCED must have complete access to such records (including invoices for goods and services and other relevant data and records), as well as the right to inspect all project work. The applicant will promptly furnish all data, reports, contracts, documents, and other information requested by DCED. Successful applicants are required to submit a final metrics report that provides an overview of the completed activities and the measurable outcomes. The report will be due 30 days following submission of the awardees' final invoice but no later than the date established in the grant agreement.

3. Grantees must have a registered bank account on their vendor record to be paid, as funding will be directly deposited in grantees' bank accounts via an Automatic Clearing House transfer of funds in accordance with the grant contract.

Funds will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis. Grantees must incur the project costs prior to requesting disbursement of grant funds.

All payment requests must be submitted using the approved payment request form received with the fully executed contract and must include copies of invoices and proof of payment verifying total costs incurred by the grantee.

Payment requests require at least 45 days for processing.

4. Organizations that are not compliant with audit or closeout report requirements for prior contracts with DCED are ineligible to receive additional financial assistance from DCED until such audit or closeout report requirements are met.
5. For consulting contracts over \$10,000, Grantee shall comply with open and competitive bidding procedures. Open and competitive bidding requires the Grantee to obtain arm's length bids from at least three bidders capable of providing or performing the services requested by the Grantee. "Arm's length" means the parties are unrelated, each party is acting in his or her own self-interest, and the transaction is based on a fair market value determination.

C. Evaluation Criteria

Applications for the COVID-19 Vaccine Outreach Grant Program will be evaluated using the criteria including, but not limited to the following:

1. **Geographical Priorities:** Grants may be distributed equally across the geography of the commonwealth to the best of DCED's ability.
2. **Vulnerable and Under-Vaccinated Populations Outreach:** Applications may receive preference for services that reach vulnerable and under-vaccinated populations.
3. **Regional Impact:** Vaccine outreach activities that have a strong regional or multi-county impact may be given preference.
4. **Partnerships:** Applicants that partner healthcare providers, community health organizations, or public health officials may be given preference.

D. Interim Reporting

Grantees may be asked to report to DCED on progress on metrics and/or milestones during the grant period. Interim reporting is only required if DCED requests it. As such, grantees should continuously track major metrics related to their vaccine outreach efforts as outlined in Section E to the best of their abilities.

E. Final Report

Following the completion of the project, grantees must submit a final metrics report that will be provided by DCED. Instructions on how and where to fill out the report will be provided to each grantee by DCED. The report will be due 30 days following submission of the awardees' final invoice but no later than July 30, 2024. The final report will require the grantee to describe performance measures, including but not limited to:

- Describe the work of your organization to educate your community and reduce hesitancy.
- Provide the total number of individuals serviced by the grant.
- Describe the work of your organization to partner with local vaccine providers, such as pharmacies or health systems, to promote vaccine awareness and uptake.
- List any successes and/or challenges of vaccine provider partnerships in reaching the high risk and underserved populations.
- Describe the work of your organization to partner with other community organizations and other trusted sources to promote vaccine awareness and uptake.
- Describe any success and/or challenges of these local partnerships in supporting community engagement and vaccine promotion.
- If funds were used for local media buys such as print, television, digital, and radio advertisements, list any metrics received.
- If funds were used for designing and producing advertising, outreach, and training materials, including but not limited to: videos, digital content, direct mail, print materials (stickers, posters, flyers, etc.), list the number of materials that were created.
- If funds were used for **virtual** vaccine-related events, provide the number of events hosted, the number of individuals participating, and briefly describe the events.
- If funds were used for **in-person** event costs related to vaccine outreach and activities, provide the number of events hosted, the number of individuals participating, and briefly describe the events.
- If funds were used for training community liaisons and outreach workers/volunteers, list the approximate number of individuals trained.

Section IV – Grants

1. Grants shall be awarded for a minimum of \$10,000 and shall not exceed a total of \$100,000. DCED may provide grants totaling more than \$100,000 on a case-by-case basis if the application requests and thoroughly justifies a higher amount; such justification could include a large regional or statewide geographic reach, or other justification at DCED's discretion.
2. Grants may be awarded at a lower amount than requested.
3. Project costs must be incurred within the timeframe established by the grant agreement to be considered eligible expenses.
4. All grantees must maintain full records to include contracts, bid tabulation, invoices, cancelled checks, and other documentation verifying costs incurred for eligible uses of the grant funds. If the full amount of the grant is not used for eligible expenses, the unused or ineligible portion of the grant must be returned to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Section V – PA Unites Against COVID Branding

The DCED Marketing Office has developed a distinctive brand to promote COVID-19 vaccines across Pennsylvania. All promotional and marketing materials must include the commonwealth's branded logo and a link to the state's PA Unites Against COVID web site. Logos and branded material in different languages can be found at [PA.GOV/COVID](https://www.pa.gov/covid).

Section VI – Limitations and Penalties

1. An applicant may not make or authorize any substantial change to an approved project without first obtaining DCED's consent in writing.
2. If the full amount of the grant is not required for the project, the unused portion shall be returned to the DCED.
3. Failure to comply with these Guidelines may result in penalties, including repayment of funds with interest.

Section VII – Program Requirements

A. Nondiscrimination

No assistance shall be awarded to an applicant under this program unless the applicant certifies that the applicant shall not discriminate against any employee or against any person seeking employment by reason of race, gender, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or in violation of the Pennsylvania Human Relations Act, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religious creed, ancestry, age, sex, national origin, handicap or disability, or in violation of any applicable federal laws. All contracts for work to be paid with grant funds must contain the Commonwealth's official nondiscrimination clause.

B. Conflicts of Interests

An officer, director, or employee of an applicant who is a party to or has a private interest in a project shall disclose the nature and extent of the interest to the governing body of the applicant, and may not vote on action of the applicant concerning the project, nor participate in the deliberations of the applicant concerning the project. Family members of the grantee or businesses with which a family member of the grantee is associated (including spouses, parents, grandparents, siblings, in-laws, aunts, uncles, cousins) may not be recipients of contracts for services under this grant.

C. Project Records

The applicant must maintain full and accurate records with respect to the project and must ensure adequate control over related parties in the project. The program office requires access to such records, as well as the ability to inspect all work, invoices, materials, and other relevant records at reasonable times and places.

Upon request of the program office, the applicant must furnish all data, reports, contracts, documents, and other information relevant to the project.

D. Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage

In those instances in which the federal Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. 3141-3144, and 3146-3148) either is not applicable or an exception would apply to projects undertaken by the Grantee, the Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage Act (43 P.S. §165-1 et. seq.) may be applicable to a project funded under this program. Prevailing Wage requirements are generally applicable to grants for construction, reconstruction, demolition, alterations, repair work, renovations, build-out and installation of machinery and equipment in excess of \$25,000. If applicable, the applicant is responsible for including prevailing wage rates in all bid documents, specifications, and construction contracts pertaining to the project funded under this program. The Department of Labor and Industry (L & I) has final authority to make prevailing wage applicability determinations. Questions may be directed to (717) 787-3681.

E. Federal Requirements

Recipients are expected to adhere to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200).

Section VIII – Contact Information

All application inquiries should be directed to:

PA Department of Community and Economic Development
Customer Service Center
400 North Street, 4th Floor
Commonwealth Keystone Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0225

1-866-466-3972

E-mail: ra-dcedcs@pa.gov

Note: If you receive a funding notice from DCED, please direct any inquiries to DCED Customer Service. Also, please have the assigned application number available.

Section IX – Vendor Registration

Note: Grantee organizations must be registered with the commonwealth's Vendor Registration System before a grant may be approved. The system tracks information regarding all vendors that do business with or receive grant funds from the commonwealth and assigns a Vendor Number to the organization. In the event an application is funded, the grantee must be registered in this system before a contract can be issued.

If you have any questions regarding Vendor Registration status, please contact the Vendor Data Management Unit at the address and phone number below. Please have your nine-digit Federal Identification number available when you call.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Vendor Data Management Unit
Payable Services Center
9th Floor, Forum Place 555 Walnut Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101

Toll Free: 877-435-7363

Local: 717-346-2676

Email: ra-pscsupplierrequests@pa.gov

If an organization is not registered with the Vendor Registration System, please visit www.vendorregistration.state.pa.us. Click on the Non-Procurement Registration Form link and follow the instructions.

The [Single Application for Assistance](#) will be accepted only as an on-line submission via dced.pa.gov/singleapp found on DCED's website dced.pa.gov.