

PHILADELPHIA COVID-19 RESPONSE PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY Updated October 2021

The Department of Public Health will continue to build upon a combination of strategies that are effective in reducing COVID-19 transmission and protecting people who are at high-risk for severe disease, particularly Black and Latino Philadelphians who are disproportionately impacted due to historic and present-day racism. Utilizing a health equity framework, data-driven decision-making, and community perspectives, we will work to:

Strategy 1: Provide equitable access to vaccine and continue to build a sustainable network of COVID-19 vaccine providers

- PDPH will continue to address gaps in vaccine access and equity by allocating City resources to communities and populations that are under-resourced.
- The City will continue to operate clinics in lower vaccination areas in collaboration with partners.
- PDPH will collaborate with other providers to maintain a sustainable network for COVID-19 vaccination services.
- PDPH will continue to address barriers to vaccination by providing transportation and interpretation resources, as well as supporting other access and functional needs, at PDPH-operated clinics.
- PDPH will expand the homebound vaccination program to increase vaccine accessibility.

Strategy 2: Promote masking to protect people who are at risk for COVID-19 due to institutional or occupational exposures and other public exposures

- The City will continue to mandate masking in settings where spread of COVID-19 is more likely to occur. Masks have been proven to reduce the risk that unvaccinated and vaccinated people will be infected with the virus.

Strategy 3: Ensure equitable access to testing services to quickly identify COVID-19 cases and clusters of disease

- PDPH will continue to fund organizations to operate low barrier community testing, operate mobile testing units in areas of highest need, and coordinate and support outbreak responses in high-risk settings.
- PDPH will expand rapid testing access through brick-and-mortar locations and distribution of at-home test kits.

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Strategy 4: Provide support services to people with limited resources who test positive for COVID-19 or are identified through contact tracing so that they can safely isolate and quarantine

- PDPH will continue to offer free lodging for Philadelphia residents to isolate and quarantine away from others.
- PDPH will bolster its ability to ensure the provision of necessary services and supports to Philadelphians at home, to fully adhere to their isolation or quarantine periods.

Strategy 5: Implement and enforce policies that prevent spread of infection and protect people who work or live in high-risk settings

- PDPH will uphold and enforce its mandates that all healthcare workers, as well as staff, students, and faculty at colleges and universities, in Philadelphia be required to be vaccinated against COVID-19, except for those with religious or medical exemptions.
- PDPH will continue to issue and revise regulations and guidance as needed to reduce community transmission.
- PDPH will ensure policies and guidance are clearly communicated to the public and business owners.

Strategy 6: Conduct education and outreach to ensure ongoing community awareness of and active participation in the City's response to COVID-19

- PDPH will expand COVID-19 mobile information desks in collaboration with partners in low vaccination neighborhoods.
- PDPH will continue its partnership with Philly Counts to conduct outreach and canvassing with trusted community messengers.
- PDPH will continue to convene and participate in virtual town halls with community leaders to provide opportunities to learn about COVID-19, ask questions, and hear directly from Health Department experts.
- PDPH will continue to share educational resources with community leaders.

Strategy 7: Use data to continuously inform, evaluate, and refine the City's response strategies

- PDPH will regularly review data to adjust planning, resources, and services.
- PDPH will continue to collect and utilize demographic data to identify disparities and allocate City resources to promote equity.
- The City will regularly collect data to monitor vaccination compliance.
- PDPH will continue to collect and publish data on the City's website.