

FEMA Opening COVID-19 Vaccination Center in Philadelphia

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PHILADELPHIA - The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Health and Human Services (HHS), the City of Philadelphia, and the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, have partnered to open a COVID-19 vaccination site at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. The site is anticipated to open as early as March 3rd, 2021.

FEMA and federal partners are planning to support this site through staffing, operations, logistics and vaccine allocations. The Philadelphia site, like other federally supported sites across the country, was selected based on data analysis including the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index and other Census data, as well as input from our state and local partners. The Philadelphia site could have a vaccination throughput of several thousand doses per day once at maximum operating capacity and would come with its own vaccination allocation, in addition to what the City of Philadelphia already receives.

"I am excited to see the federal government continue to step up to the plate and support us to help protect every Philadelphian," said Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney. "Every city in the country, including Philadelphia, is currently struggling with not having enough COVID vaccine to meet the demand of their residents, so this center will make a huge difference. We look forward to seeing this COVID-19 Vaccination Center join our system of vaccine distribution channels which includes community clinics, hospitals, neighborhood-based health centers, pharmacies, mobile sites and more. It's a key step to recovery and getting our city that much closer back to normal. The partnerships with our state and federal partners have been strong throughout this response to allow us to address the needs of Philadelphians. We're looking forward to getting past COVID-19 and these historic challenges, together.

"Our three goals for distributing vaccine have always been: do it fast, do it so it saves the most lives, and do it equitably. With FEMA agreeing to support a Vaccination Center in Philadelphia, we can administer vaccines faster, and by



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holding it at the Pennsylvania Convention Center, in a central location near multiple public transit lines, we can ensure that many of our highest risk residents and people of all backgrounds can get easy, equitable access,” said Philadelphia Department of Public Health Commissioner Dr. Thomas Farley. “A federally supported Vaccination Center will be a great addition to our comprehensive, citywide vaccine distribution system which already includes hospitals, federally qualified health centers, pharmacies, and community partners.”

“The Convention Center has a long history as a central and accessible meeting point for the Philadelphia community. FEMA’s partnership and expertise will help the City of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania deliver vaccinations in a safe, timely and equitable manner,” said FEMA Region 3 Acting Administrator Barlow. “This vaccination site, the second of federally supported site in Region 3, will play a critical role accelerating the vaccination mission.”

Ensuring vulnerable and under-served populations have access to vaccines was a priority in the site selection process. The Pennsylvania Convention Center’s central location, accessibility by public transportation, logistics capability, large size, and existing city contracts in support of vaccination operations made it a logical choice for the first federally operated site in Pennsylvania. FEMA and federal partner agencies will provide clinical and support staff for the site, freeing the City of Philadelphia up to focus staff and resource on vaccination efforts in neighborhoods throughout the city.

Specific details on opening date and registration process are forthcoming, as FEMA works with the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, Pennsylvania Department of Public Health, Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management and Philadelphia Department of Public Health in support of a safe, timely and equitable federally supported community vaccination site.

“FEMA remains committed to helping Americans during this time and we will continue to work with our partners to stop the spread of this disease,” said Region 3 Acting Administrator Barlow.

FEMA is working with Pennsylvania officials to assess other potential federally supported vaccination sites across the state.

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