



Marion County
OREGON
Health & Human Services

COVID-19 VACCINE COMMUNICATION PLAN

Marion County Health & Human Services

Table of Contents

Overview.....	2
Pre-Vaccine Action Steps.....	3
Phase 1.....	3
Phase 2.....	6
Phase 3.....	8

Overview:

Mission: *Ensure timely, accurate, and accessible information about COVID-19 vaccination is provided to Marion County's diverse communities and that mechanisms are in place for the Health & Human Services Department to receive feedback from the community to adjust messaging as needed.*

Purpose: In order to ensure equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccine, Marion County Health & Human Services has developed a comprehensive plan incorporating a health equity lens to select partners and tiered distribution of vaccine to those at higher risk of serious illness or death, and communities disproportionately impacted by the virus.

This communication plan incorporates both internal and external communication methods to ensure MCHHS employees and the public understand the process used to develop the distribution plan, how to access vaccines, and who to contact with questions or concerns.

Key Health Issue: COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted communities of color, the elderly, and individuals with underlying health conditions since its arrival in the United States early in 2020. By working collaboratively with community partners, we can ensure thoughtful and thorough communications processes are put into place to help these communities access the vaccine, and to help the broader public understand the importance of prioritizing these groups in vaccine distribution.

SWOT Analysis:

Strengths

- Countywide COVID-19 Communications Team has had time to develop increased communication channels, and has a thorough understanding of the impact the virus has had on the community.
- Communications Team has time to predict and plan for challenges and to develop strategies to mitigate them.

Weaknesses

- Internal translation resources are limited in languages other than English and Spanish. Development of messaging in Russian, Chuukese, Marshallese, and indigenous languages from South America will take longer to develop unless new translation resources are identified.

Opportunities

- New relationships with community based organizations will allow for increased culturally appropriate messaging through appropriate channels in a timely manner, and additional resources.
- Communications Team has time to seek input from CBOs, Incident Management Team, and other partners to bolster communication plan and tactics used to disseminate messages.

Threats

- If development process of distribution plan is not well communicated, likely to receive significant criticism from many stakeholders.
- Mistrust of government and new vaccine likely to form a barrier in wide-spread use of the vaccine.
- Some communities may feel that others are being wrongfully prioritized.

Important Resources:

- Marion County’s COVID-19 Data Dashboard and supplemental materials provided by the county’s epidemiologists provide an in-depth understanding of communities most impacted by the virus, which will aid communications staff in explaining vaccine prioritization and health equity.
- Contracts with local Community Based Organizations have the potential to significantly enhance department’s outreach to local Latinx, Russian, and Pacific Islander communities, which have born a great burden from the virus.

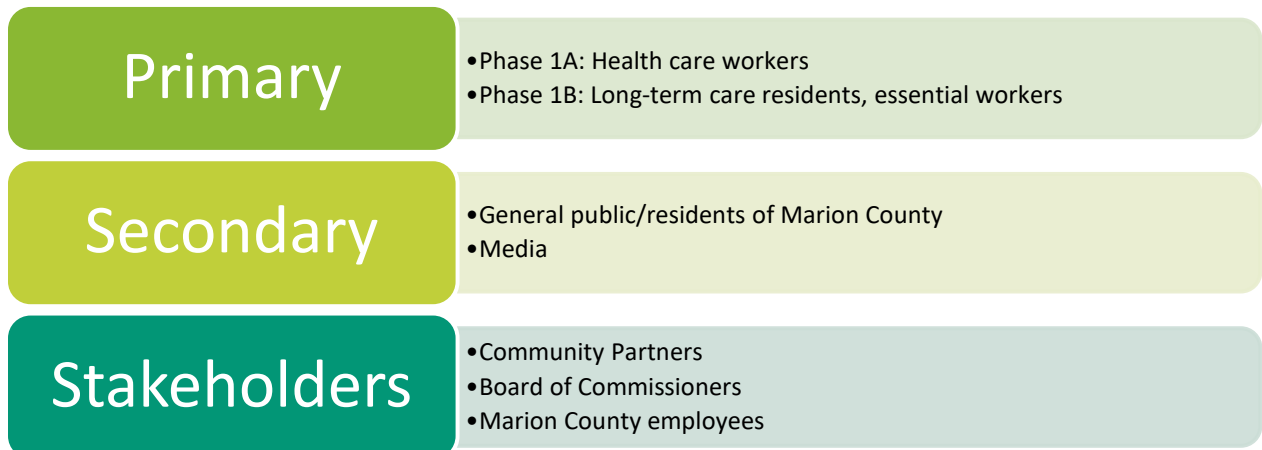
Pre-Vaccine Action Steps:

- Establish regular meeting cadence between Incident Command, Public Information Team, and Community Based Organizations to discuss key messaging, distribution channels, and opportunities to support one another.
- Solicit feedback from department Equity, Diversion, and Inclusion Coordinator, and community leaders.
- Identify spokespersons to record videos and radio PSAs in multiple languages.
- Develop matrix of available channels and resources to reach target audiences, including television, radio, and key influencers to share information in English, Spanish, Russian, Marshallese, and Chuukese; begin conversations with appropriate contacts to ensure channels will be ready to distribute messaging on potentially short timelines.

Phase 1 Vaccine Distribution Communication Plan:

Overview: In Phase 1, vaccines will be distributed in two phases: Phase 1A and Phase 1B. Phase 1A will prioritize vaccine distribution to healthcare workers, including any paid and unpaid personnel serving in healthcare settings. Phase 1B will expand to prioritize individuals living in long-term care facilities and essential workers in industries beyond health care.

Audiences:



Objectives:

- Clearly communicate justification of planned resource allocation.
- Ensure primary audience is aware of availability of vaccine and how to get it.
- Address initial hesitance to receive vaccine.
- Account for linguistic and cultural barriers to promote equitable access to information.
 - Ensure key messages are available and delivered through culturally appropriate channels in Spanish, Russian, Marshallese, and Chuukese.

Phase 1A Key Messages:

- COVID-19 vaccines are now available for all health care workers in both paid and unpaid positions.
- Marion County has used a Health Equity Lens to determine which groups should receive the vaccine first. Initially, the vaccines will be available for health care workers in order to protect the health of those with the skills and knowledge to care for others sick with COVID-19 and other medical needs.
- The vaccine requires 2 doses which must be taken 21-28 days apart, and by the same manufacturer.
- The vaccine will not cure you if you are already sick but has proven effective in preventing future illness. There is currently no evidence that an individual cannot get COVID-19 more than once, therefore it is recommended that all adults get the vaccine, even if they have already had the virus.

Phase 1A Channels and Tactics:

- For Primary Audiences:
 - Health Care Workers: Blast fax and emails directly to providers throughout Marion County using ClickSend.
 - Collaborate with large health care systems on messaging/support internal efforts of partners to deliver information as needed.
 - Host Town Hall meetings with via Zoom Webinar to share information with First Responders, EMS and Law Enforcement.
- For Secondary Audiences:
 - Social Media: Positive messaging of vaccine availability and effectiveness; explanation of allocation priorities and each phase.
 - Anticipate and mitigate hostility from those who are angry they are not able to receive the vaccine yet, and false information from those who do not trust that the vaccine is safe.
 - Provide messaging in English, Russian, and Spanish.
 - Host bi-weekly town halls via Zoom Webinar and Facebook Live in English and Spanish to share information and answer questions from the community.
 - Media: Press release when we know when vaccines will be available explaining the allocation phases and details of prioritization.

- Website: Update Marion County COVID-19 website to include a vaccine distribution page with current Phase, important documents, and answers to frequently asked questions.
- For Stakeholders:
 - Board of Commissioners: Maintain open communication with BOC through bi-weekly COVID-19 Policy Meetings and regular status updates as we get closer to vaccine distribution.
 - Marion County Employees: Utilize all county email and GovDelivery to share updates about vaccine distribution with county employees. Ensure distribution strategy and prioritization are explained clearly. Messaging should mitigate concerns over safety of vaccine.
 - Community Partners:
 - GovDelivery: Transfer Liaison Team list of community partners into GovDelivery. Establish regular email cadence to provide important updates about vaccine distribution with partners, as well as key messages we hope they will share.
 - Weekly Partner Calls: Utilize weekly partner calls hosted by the Liaison Team to keep partners up to date and to hear their feedback about current messaging, messaging needs, and any rumors they are hearing in the community.
 - Utilize CBO agreements to amplify Phase 1 messaging and to provide linguistically appropriate messaging through culturally appropriate channels.

Phase 1B Key Messages:

- COVID-19 vaccines are now available for residents of long-term care facilities and essential workers.
- Marion County has used a Health Equity Lens to determine which groups should receive the vaccine first.
 - Residents of long-term care facilities experience the highest percentage of severe illness and death from COVID-19. Vaccine distribution to this group will improve the quality of life of residents living in long term care facilities and reduce the burden of the disease in congregate care settings.
 - Essential workers, including those working in agriculture, correctional facilities, and workers at long term care facilities, among others, are often at a higher risk of catching the virus due to the nature of their work and working conditions. Vaccine distribution to this group will protect the health and safety of essential workers and their families, and ensure essential resources and services continue to be available.
- The vaccine requires 2 doses which must be taken 21-28 days apart, and by the same manufacturer.
- The vaccine will not cure you if you are already sick but has proven effective in preventing future illness. There is currently no evidence that an individual cannot get COVID-19 more than once, therefore it is recommended that all adults get the vaccine, even if they have already had the virus.

Phase 1B Channels and Tactics:

- For Primary Audiences:

- Long Term Care Facility Residents: Collaborate with OHA and DHS to identify messaging roles and responsibilities. Offer support as needed.
 - Essential Workers: Notify known businesses and contacts of the vaccine's availability and where employees can get it.
 - Agriculture: Utilize partnerships with Oregon Farm Bureau, Marion County Farm Bureau, and CBOs to share messaging.
 - Social Media messaging
 - Digital Campaign
 - Utilize Spanish, English, and Russian speaking radio to deliver important information about vaccine effectiveness, who is eligible in current phase, and where they can receive it.
- For Secondary Audiences:
 - Social Media: Positive messaging of vaccine availability and effectiveness; explanation of allocation priorities and each phase.
 - Anticipate and mitigate hostility from those who are angry they are not able to receive the vaccine yet, and false information from those who do not trust that the vaccine is safe.
 - Provide messaging in English, Russian, and Spanish.
 - Continue bi-weekly town halls via Zoom Webinar and Facebook Live.
 - Media: Press release announcing start of Phase 1B.
 - Website: Update vaccine distribution page with current Phase, important documents, and answers to frequently asked questions.
 - For Stakeholders:
 - Board of Commissioners: Maintain open communication with BOC through bi-weekly COVID-19 Policy Meetings and regular status updates as we get closer to vaccine distribution.
 - Marion County Employees: Utilize all county email and GovDelivery to share updates about vaccine distribution with county employees. Ensure distribution strategy and prioritization are explained clearly. Messaging should mitigate concerns over safety of vaccine.
 - Community Partners:
 - GovDelivery: Transfer Liaison Team list of community partners into GovDelivery. Establish regular email cadence to provide important updates about vaccine distribution with partners, as well as key messages we hope they will share.
 - Weekly Partner Calls: Utilize weekly partner calls hosted by the Liaison Team to keep partners up to date and to hear their feedback about current messaging, messaging needs, and any rumors they are hearing in the community.
 - Utilize CBO agreements to amplify Phase 1 messaging and to provide linguistically appropriate messaging through culturally appropriate channels.

Phase 2 Vaccine Distribution Communication Plan

Overview: With the expanded availability of vaccine in Phase 2, vaccines will be available for communities disproportionately impacted by the virus, including communities of color, rural communities, individuals 65 years and older, individuals with disabilities, individuals experiencing homelessness, individuals with preexisting conditions, and individuals living in congregate care settings not identified during Phase 1. Marion County will also prioritize allocation for zip codes with higher incidence rates.

Audiences:



Objectives:

- Clearly communicate justification of planned resource allocation.
- Ensure primary audience is aware of availability of vaccine and how to get it.
- Address initial hesitance to receive vaccine.
- Account for linguistic and cultural barriers to promote equitable access to information.

Phase 2 Key Messages:

- COVID-19 vaccines are now available for communities who have been disproportionately impacted by the virus, including: BIPOC communities, individuals 65 years and older, individuals with preexisting conditions and/or a disability, individuals experiencing homelessness, and those living in congregate care settings.
 - These communities are experiencing the highest incidence rates, hospitalizations, and deaths from COVID-19. Early vaccination may reduce the prevalence of COVID-19 in these communities, which may reduce the number of cases, hospitalizations, and deaths in the county.

- The vaccine requires 2 doses which must be taken 21-28 days apart, and by the same manufacturer.
- The vaccine will not cure you if you are already sick but has proven effective in preventing future illness. There is currently no evidence that an individual cannot get COVID-19 more than once, therefore it is recommended that all adults get the vaccine, even if they have already had the virus.

Phase 2 Channels and Tactics:

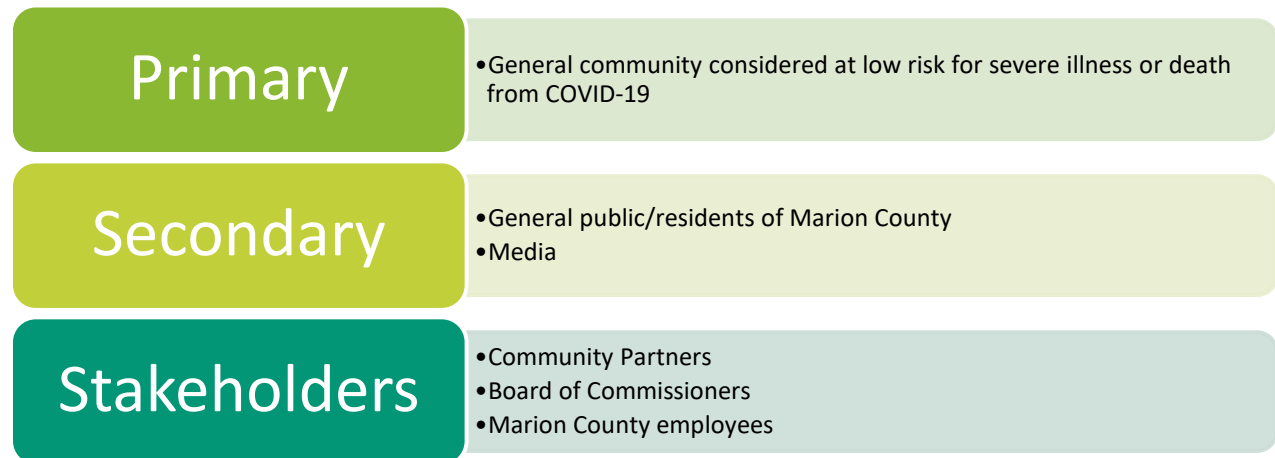
- For Primary Audiences:
 - Leverage relationships with CBOs to ensure messaging is delivered through culturally appropriate channels.
 - Utilize Spanish- and English- speaking radio to deliver important information about vaccine effectiveness, who is eligible in current phase, and where they can receive it.
 - Video PSAs in multiple languages to be shared by partner organizations, as well as through Marion County channels.
 - Collaborate with congregate care settings and DHS as needed to provide information to individuals living in congregate care settings.
- For Secondary Audiences:
 - Social Media: Positive messaging of vaccine availability and effectiveness; explanation of allocation priorities and each phase.
 - Anticipate and mitigate hostility from those who are angry they are not able to receive the vaccine yet, and false information from those who do not trust that the vaccine is safe.
 - Provide messaging in English, Russian, and Spanish.
 - Media: Press release when we know when Phase 2 will begin, which explains who may now receive the vaccine, why they were prioritized, and how they can get it.
 - Website: Update Marion County COVID-19 website to include a vaccine distribution page with current Phase, important documents, and answers to frequently asked questions.
- For Stakeholders:
 - Board of Commissioners: Maintain open communication with BOC through bi-weekly COVID-19 Policy Meetings and regular status updates.
 - Marion County Employees: Utilize all county email and GovDelivery to share updates about vaccine distribution with county employees. Ensure distribution strategy and prioritization are explained clearly. Messaging should mitigate concerns over safety of vaccine.
 - Community Partners:
 - GovDelivery: Transfer Liaison Team list of community partners into GovDelivery. Establish regular email cadence to provide important updates about vaccine distribution with partners, as well as key messages we hope they will share.

- Weekly Partner Calls: Utilize weekly partner calls hosted by the Liaison Team to keep partners up to date and to hear their feedback about current messaging, messaging needs, and any rumors they are hearing in the community.
- Utilize CBO agreements to amplify Phase 2 messaging and to provide linguistically appropriate messaging through culturally appropriate channels.

Phase 3 Vaccine Distribution Communication Plan

Overview: In Phase 3, vaccines will be available to all community members. Messaging will focus on the importance of wide-spread vaccine use to stop the spread of COVID-19 and the need to complete both doses.

Audiences:



Objectives:

- Clearly communicate importance of widespread vaccine uptake and importance of completing both doses.
- Address hesitance to receive vaccine and mistrust expressed by community members.
- Account for linguistic and cultural barriers to promote equitable access to information.

Phase 3 Key Messages:

- Vaccines are now available for all community members who were unable to receive them in Phases 1 and 2.
- Vaccines are available through your local pharmacy, health care provider, or health department.
- The vaccine has led to a decrease in COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths, and has proven to be effective (include relevant local stats).
- The vaccine requires 2 doses which must be taken 21-28 days apart, and by the same manufacturer.
- The vaccine will not cure you if you are already sick but has proven effective in preventing future illness. There is currently no evidence that an individual cannot get COVID-19 more than once,

therefore it is recommended that all adults get the vaccine, even if they have already had the virus.

Phase 3 Channels and Tactics:

- For Primary Audiences:
 - Social Media: Incorporate regular messaging about vaccine availability, myths and facts, vaccine PODs, and data. Incorporate mix of media, including videos, articles, information from partners, and graphics in multiple languages.
 - Radio: Utilize pre-existing radio spots and paid advertising to reach residents throughout the county.
 - Video PSAs in multiple languages to be shared by partner organizations, as well as through Marion County channels.
 - Collaborate with CBOs to enhance messaging to communities of color about vaccine effectiveness and where to get it.
 - Community Town Halls in English and Spanish.
 - Interviews and PSAs through local radio stations serving English-, Spanish-, and Russian-speaking communities.

- For Secondary Audiences:
 - Media: Press release with information about vaccine availability, including where community members can receive it and the county's role in distribution to the public (PODs, etc).
 - Website: Update Marion County COVID-19 website to include a vaccine distribution page with current Phase, important documents, answers to frequently asked questions, and information about upcoming vaccination events.

- For Stakeholders:
 - Board of Commissioners: Maintain open communication with BOC through bi-weekly COVID-19 Policy Meetings and regular status updates.
 - Marion County Employees: Utilize all county email and GovDelivery to share updates about vaccine distribution with county employees. Ensure distribution strategy and prioritization are explained clearly. Messaging should mitigate concerns over safety of vaccine.
 - Community Partners:
 - GovDelivery: Transfer Liaison Team list of community partners into GovDelivery. Establish regular email cadence to provide important updates about vaccine distribution with partners, as well as key messages we hope they will share.
 - Weekly Partner Calls: Utilize weekly partner calls hosted by the Liaison Team to keep partners up to date and to hear their feedback about current messaging, messaging needs, and any rumors they are hearing in the community.
 - Utilize CBO agreements to amplify Phase 2 messaging and to provide linguistically appropriate messaging through culturally appropriate channels.