

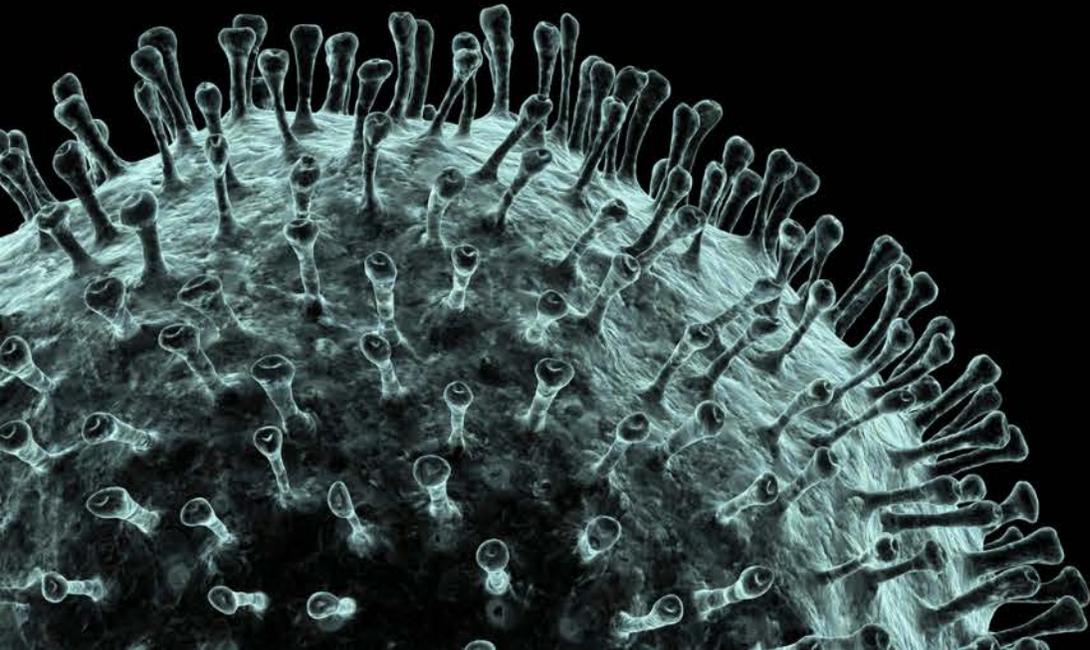
# COVID-19 Conversations



**Katie Greene**

Visiting Policy Associate

Duke-Margolis Center for Health Policy



[COVID19Conversations.org](https://COVID19Conversations.org)

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**Supporting an Equitable Distribution  
of COVID-19 Vaccines:  
Key Themes, Strategies, and Challenges  
Across State and Territorial COVID-19  
Vaccination Plans**

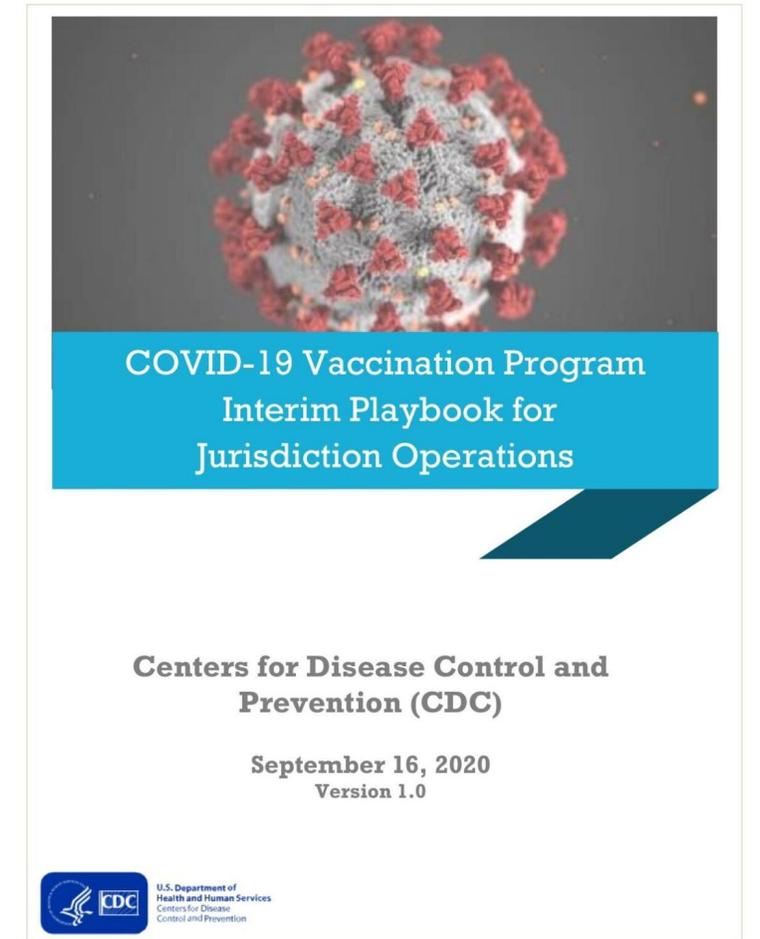
December 9, 2020

# “The Last Mile”: The State Role in COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

**States, Territories, and six local jurisdictions receiving vaccine allocations will be responsible for:**

- Identifying and allocating vaccines to critical populations
- Logistical planning to meet vaccine storage, handling, and administration requirements
- Supporting vaccine provider enrollment, vaccine ordering, distribution, storage, and handling
- Engaging providers, partners, and communities
- Vaccine program communications

*Jurisdictional Vaccination Plans were due to CDC October 16, 2020.*

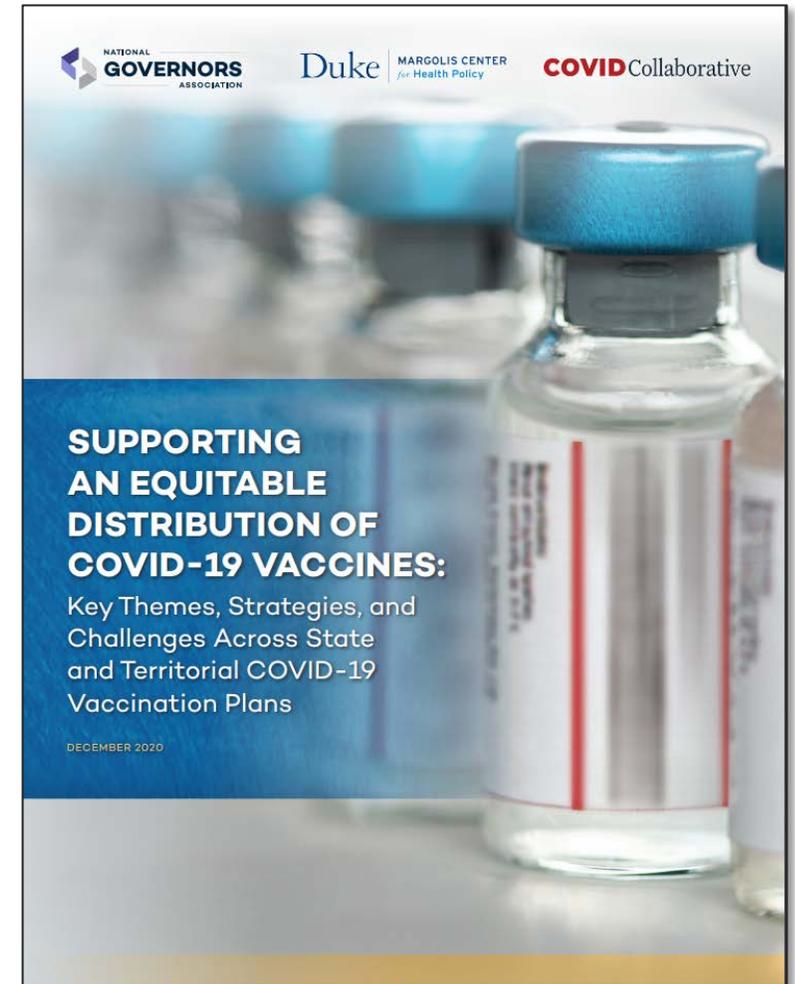


# New Report: Analysis of state and territorial vaccination plans

Collaborative effort of the **National Governors Association**, **Duke-Margolis Center for Health Policy**, and **COVID Collaborative** to assist Governors and their partners in ongoing vaccine planning efforts.

Aims to support identification of key issues and sharing of promising practices across the country across planning domains:

Goals, Principles, and Lessons Learned	Cross-Cutting and State-Specific Challenges	Determining Allocation to Critical Populations	Distribution Strategies Across Phases
Ensuring Effective Distribution and Management	Building a Robust Data Infrastructure	Supporting Equity in Distribution and Access	Communicating with the Public and Vaccination Partners



# Identifying Key Challenges Across State Plans

**Cross-cutting challenges:** Need for additional federal support for vaccine program activities, including:

- Funding for vaccine program activities
- More information, guidance, and resources

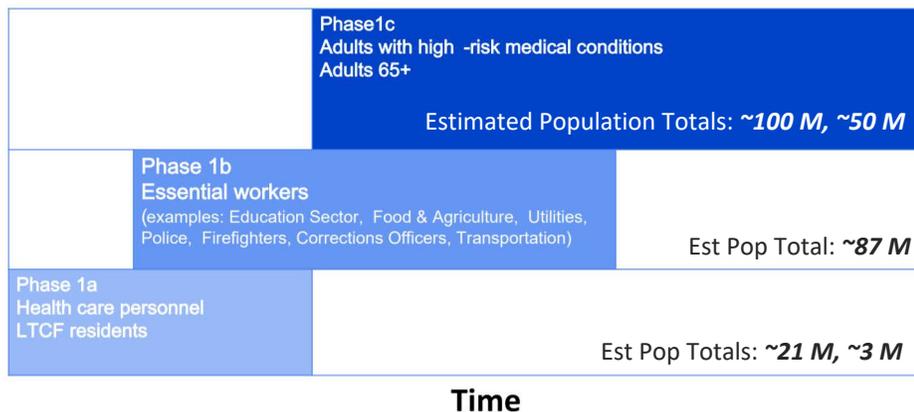
**Other challenges raised by states:**

- Limited public health and provider capacity
- Limited ultra-cold storage capacity and other logistical challenges
- Persistent technology concerns
- Lack of public confidence and vaccine hesitancy
- State- specific conditions: challenges related to access for rural populations, border states, weather

# Key Challenge: How to Allocate Early, Limited Vaccine to Critical Populations

- **Challenge:** Allocating limited vaccine to critical populations in a manner that is transparent, equitable, and protects public health and those most at risk from COVID-19

Potential ACIP Phase 1 Populations



Source: CDC ACIP [Dec 2020](#) meeting presentations.

## Allocation Approaches in State Plans:

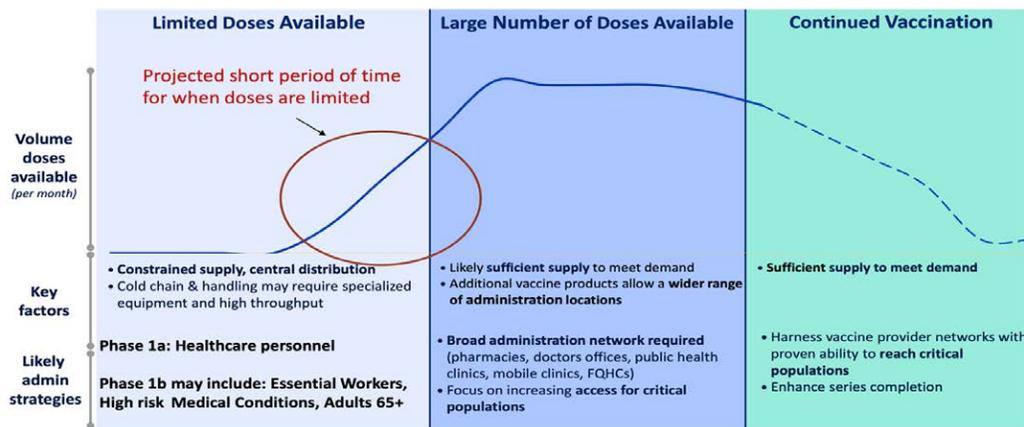
- Creating or leveraging **Advisory Committees** to determine recommended populations or subpopulations (**12** states)
- **Seeking input** from critical populations and providers that serve them
- Developing **methodologies** for prioritizing within phases
- Using data and vulnerability indexes to allocate to areas with high disease transmission or existing health disparities
- **BUT** states must be able to remain **flexible and responsive** to new information

**Key Consideration for Governors:** Set criteria for priority allocation of vaccines that are consistent with recommendations from CDC's ACIP, responsive to state needs and clearly communicated to the public.

# Key Challenge: How to shift distribution strategies as more populations are eligible receive the vaccine

- **Challenge:** States must address a variety of operational challenges to equitably and efficiently distribute and administer vaccines to different populations across phases.

CDC Phased Distribution Illustration



Adapted from: COVID-19 Vaccination Program Interim Playbook for Jurisdictional Operations

- **Distribution Approaches Across State Plans**
  - **Phase 1:** Closed distribution in healthcare settings, LTCFs, mobile “strike teams”
  - **Strategies in later phases:**
    - Engaging with a wide variety of community partners -- primary care providers, pharmacists, community health centers, local health departments, home health workers, employers, schools, faith-based organizations and community organizations - to increase access in convenient and accessible settings.
    - Building on seasonal flu and drive-through testing infrastructure
    - Expanding scope of practice and recruiting non-traditional partners to expand surge capacity.

**Key Consideration for Governors:** Ensure that critical coordination structures are in place to flexibly shift strategies to respond to changing dynamics, and address logistical issues early.

# Key Challenge: How to Track and Report Vaccine Administration Data

- **Challenge:** states must scale or augment their immunization data infrastructure to manage, track, and report vaccine information.
  - Existing IIS or complimentary data systems must be capable of supporting provider enrollment, vaccine ordering and inventory management, tracking dose-level administration, and reporting to federal systems
  - Multiple states have laws or regs that prohibit reporting of identifiable data other limitations on sharing immunization data
  - New, untested federal systems may pose risks or learning curves

- **Approaches for bolstering COVID-19 vaccination data infrastructure across plans:**
  - Strengthening existing immunization data systems or augmenting with VAMS or PrepMod for mass vaccination sites
  - **38** states plan to connect to the **IZ Gateway** to report data to CDC or share with other jurisdictions
  - Many states plan on hosting publicly available **data dashboards** to track and share vaccine administration data with the public

**Key Consideration for Governors:** Deploy and test data management and reporting systems to ensure accountability for results, ability to adjust, and transparency to the public

# Key Challenge: How to Promote Equity and Engage Communities

**Challenge:** The COVID-19 Pandemic has had a disproportionate burden on communities of color, many of whom may face additional barriers to vaccine access or demonstrate significant hesitancy toward a COVID-19 vaccine. Strategies are needed to meaningfully engage these communities in the planning process, and to partner with community leaders and organizations in providing information and responding to community concerns.

- **Strategies to promote equity and engage communities across state plans:**
  - Centering equity a guiding principle
  - Engaging state health equity task forces
  - Using data to monitor access and addressing barriers to care
  - Developing culturally and linguistically-responsive materials and messaging
  - Partnering with trusted messengers, providers and organizations serving high-risk communities

**Key Consideration for Governors:** Meaningfully engage local health departments, representatives from high-risk populations, health systems, providers, community leaders, and organizations serving at-risk populations in planning activities

# Key Takeaways



Additional funding, guidance, and resources are needed to support state vaccination program activities



**Set criteria for priority allocation of vaccines** that are consistent with recommendations from the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), responsive to state needs and clearly communicated to the public



**Ensure that critical coordination structures are in place** to flexibly shift strategies to respond to changing dynamics in vaccine availability, demand, and emerging challenges



**Deploy and test data management and reporting systems** to ensure accountability for results, ability to adjust, and transparency to the public



**Meaningfully engage** local health departments, representatives from high-risk populations, health systems, providers, community leaders, and organizations serving at-risk populations in planning activities