

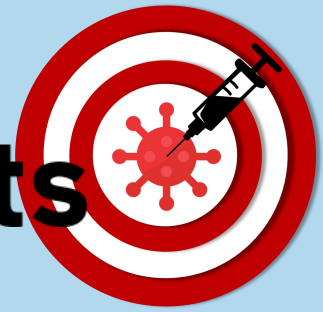
# COVID-19 Vaccine Communications Plan



**YOLO COUNTY**

**Last Updated: December 16, 2020**

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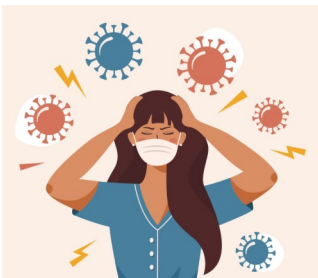
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# BACKGROUND



The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) emerged in late 2019 and has become a pandemic unlike anything we've seen or experienced. This virus continues to impact the entire world and requires drastic changes to the way people live, work and gather. In the United States as of December 10, this virus has killed more than 290,000 people and infected more than 15 million people.

Due to the dangers associated with the virus and the growing death rate, efforts to develop a vaccine have been fast tracked. Instead of the usual 6-10 year process in which vaccines are researched, tested, assessed and approved, the process was shortened to 12-14 months for the COVID-19 vaccine.



[A recent study by The Associated Press—NORC Center for Public Affairs Research](#) showed that about 25% of U.S. adults aren't sure if they want to get vaccinated against COVID-19 and another 25% say they won't get vaccinated at all. There are multiple reasons for the hesitancy and refusal around the COVID-19 vaccine. Some of the more common reasons include:

- Worries about the side effects of the vaccine.
- Thoughts that the vaccine process was rushed.
- Concerns the vaccine could infect them with COVID-19.



The vaccine is currently prioritized by risk level and many in the general public may not get the opportunity to get the vaccine until the Spring or Summer of 2021. In the meantime, the groundwork to repair misinformation, address questions, set expectations and build transparency can start now so that later when residents do have the opportunity to take the vaccine, residents are more confident in the vaccine and encouraged to take it.

As part of the local collaboration and communication effort in this unprecedented time, your help is needed to help educate and inspire our residents.

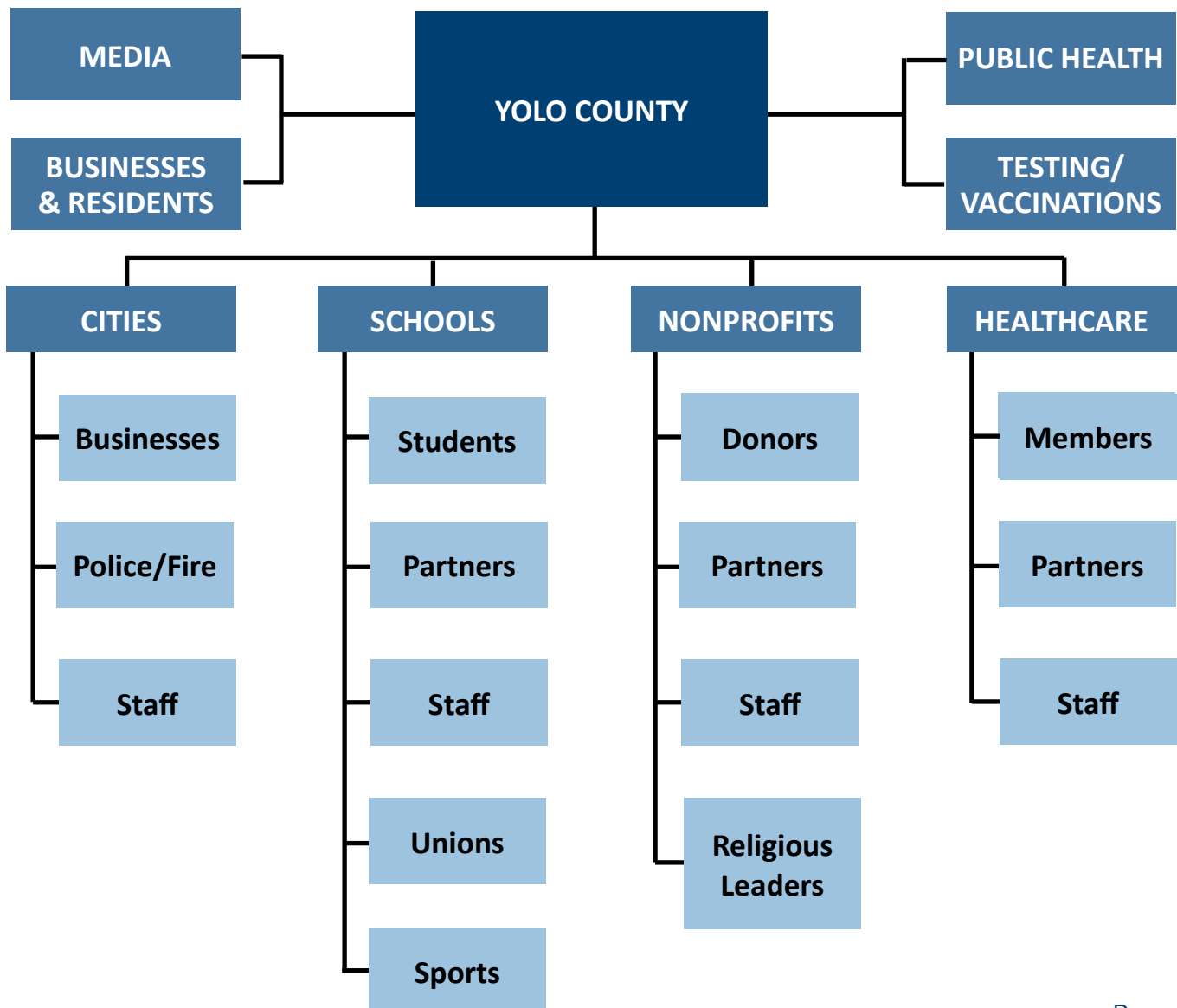
Yolo County has created this mini communications plan ('communications' is focused on how messages are delivered and 'communication' is the meaning behind the messages) to help guide local education and communications efforts so that messages are aligned and consistent across sectors, partners, and agencies. Our residents are diverse and (yes) opinionated, but they also want to do good and absolutely value their communities. With your assistance and this plan, we can do this together.

# ORG CHART

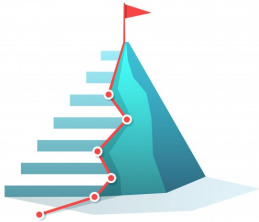


Organizational charts are most often used as a graphical representation of an organization's structure but can also be used for plans that are as encompassing as the COVID-19 vaccine. By creating an org chart, partners and individuals can gain quick understanding of how the communications structure is designed, how to funnel questions and where to place the accountability of a task. As partners and agencies are added and the latticework of collaboration grows, this graphic will help new agencies better understand where they fit and who to connect to.

For the COVID-19 vaccine communications plan, the County will act as the 'leader' that builds and starts the message that then connects to other agencies and partners. The County is fully aware that some agencies have their own network or chart that they either lead or are a part of. The County is not superseding those other networks but hopes to work in tandem with them for the purposes of the COVID-19 vaccine communications plan. Please note, there will likely be crossover for many of these subgroups/sectors.



# GOAL



The goal of this communications plan is to educate as many Yolo County residents as possible about the COVID-19 vaccine and then encourage them to take the vaccine, once it is made available for their prioritization group.

# STRATEGY



Yolo County is a culturally rich region with four cities, Davis, West Sacramento, Winters and Woodland, and vast unincorporated land. Yolo County is also made up of many smaller communities with specific identities. Each community is equally significant, filled with a wealth of diversity, culture and experience. Thus, there needs to be a focus and latticework of strategies and messages that complement each other, along with a network of partners, to educate residents on the phases of the COVID-19 vaccine that build on synergy, knowledge and buy in. Nothing of this magnitude (i.e. vaccinating hundreds of millions of people as quickly as possible) has occurred in our lifetime and requires a plan, a commitment to cooperation and personal responsibility. To help reach all of our communities, the following strategies about the COVID-19 vaccine have been crafted:

## STRATEGY 1: PROVIDE INFORMATION THAT IS TRUSTED, VERIFIED AND UP TO DATE.

- Information about COVID-19 is constantly changing as experts learn more about the disease and the vaccine. What we knew six months ago may not be as accurate as what we know now. It's important to educate the public that information can change and that it can still be trusted.
- Share information from trusted sources, such as:
  - \* [Yolo County's Roadmap to Recovery Webpage](#)  
(If we don't put out accurate news first, residents will go searching for other sites or opinions that are not as accurate.)
  - \* [The State of California's COVID-19 Response](#)
  - \* [The California Department of Public Health](#)
  - \* [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)
  - \* [The U.S. Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#)
- Or from trusted news outlets (Pulitzer Prize winning news sources):
  - \* [The Associated Press](#)
  - \* [The New York Times](#)
  - \* [The Wall Street Journal](#)
  - \* [The Washington Post](#)

- If the public has inaccurate information, provide them resources to help verify their information. Ask questions like: What does the author know about the subject? Where did this person or site get their information? When was it written or has it been reviewed? Also use multiple sources to determine accuracy or reliable fact check websites, like [AP News](#), [NPR](#), or [FactCheck.org](#).

## STRATEGY 2: CREATE EASY TO UNDERSTAND MESSAGES.

- Only about [41% of Yolo County residents](#) over the age of 25 have a Bachelor’s Degree or higher. The [Literacy Project](#) says that about 50% of adults cannot read a book written at an eighth grade level while the [National Center for Educational Statistics](#) says 21 percent of adults in the United States (about 43 million) fall into the illiterate/functionally illiterate category. In addition, people don’t always want to read at their education attainment level. Consequently, simple and clear messages are the best ways to reach the majority of our residents. For residents that want more information, provide a web link.
- Messages should be short with one main statement and 1-3 supports (if needed). Simple and clear messages can build awareness and loyalty. People tend to listen to messages that don’t talk ‘above’ them or make them feel dim but to messages that talk to them.
- Cut out as much jargon as possible. Break down difficult or intimidating words into simpler ones, even if it means more words and longer sentences. People can become confused and frustrated by the many acronyms, the inherently complex healthcare terminologies and the ‘political-speak’ or expressions that often get jumbled with COVID-19. If you get confused with information, imagine our residents.

If you can't  
explain it simply,  
you don't  
understand it  
well enough.

Albert Einstein

## STRATEGY 3: ENSURE COLLATERALS ARE MULTILINGUAL (AT LEAST IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH).

- Yolo County has a diverse landscape with almost [35% of the population speaking a language other than English at home](#). The most [common languages spoken at home](#) in Yolo County after English are Spanish (43,613 speakers) and Chinese (10,211 speakers). In addition, Yolo County is heavily centered around agriculture, which often employs Spanish speaking individuals, who frequently bring their families with them.
- Multilingual messages also capture nuances, authenticity and cultural references that sometimes English-only materials cannot.

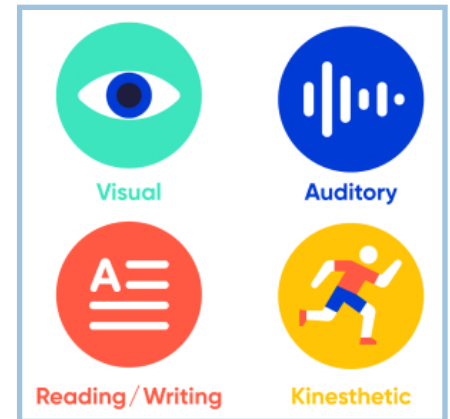


- Messages that embrace diversity can further engagement, reach and buy-in from communities. People identify with more than one culture, socio-economic group or ethnic group in today’s society. The more we embrace diversity, the more we build understanding and tolerance.
- Messages and content should be translated in at least English and Spanish. Chinese and Russian are also other languages to consider translating to for key demographics, especially in Davis or West Sacramento. Yolo County has multiple staff in the COVID-19 Response Operations Center (CROC) that can translate into Spanish and 1 staff for Russian.

#### STRATEGY 4: DELIVER PRODUCTS THAT ARE MULTISENSORY.

- Not everyone learns or gets their information the same way. Studies estimate that about half of the population have affinities for several different learning styles. By providing information in multiple formats, the greater the reach to residents. The four main types of learning are:

- \* Visual learners (the most common type of learners) need to see information visually. Example: bus ads, posters, pictures or maps.
- \* Auditory learners need to hear the information. Example: radio ads, storytelling, or songs.
- \* Kinesthetic learners (the least common type of learners) need to engage in an activity. Example: Participating in a COVID-19 vaccine activity or doing their own research.
- \* Reading/writing learners need to learn through words. Example: Reading health orders, taking notes or other traditional methods of study.



#### STRATEGY 5: CONNECT WITH PARTNERS FOR MULTI-TOUCH, CONSISTENT MESSAGING.

- Studies have shown that it takes three to seven impressions before a message registers or ‘sinks in.’ This is called ‘effective frequency.’ Higher frequencies of messages usually impact greater behavior change.
- The communications channels and partners that work together on one unified message is called ‘integrated marketing.’ The more impressions a person gets from trusted sources, the more likely they are to trust or listen to the message. This also cuts through the clutter of social media and news.

#### STRATEGY 6: CREATE EMOTIONAL CONNECTIONS—TO COMMUNITIES, PEOPLE, OR MOTIVATIONS.

- Sharing stories and emotions can create more engagement and value for residents. In an age where information and messaging are constantly on overload, creating attachments through emotional connections forms an experience that people are more likely to remember.
- Messages like:
  - \* “I lost my mom/sibling/grandparent to COVID-19. They were healthy and didn’t think they could die from this. Now, we’ll always have this empty spot in our family.”
  - \* “I laughed at the idea that my local hospital would need to use the parking garage for ICU beds. Now both my husband and I are sick with COVID-19 and we are here.”
  - \* The vaccine means that I can keep working and feeding my kids. That I can keep paying rent and we won’t be homeless.”



## STRATEGY 7: USE TRUSTED MESSENGERS IN THE COMMUNITY.

Trusted messengers can look like and encompass different types of people in each community. These individuals understand the needs of their community, communicate in culturally and linguistically appropriate ways, can provide deep and valuable insights and deliver authenticity in a way that no one else can. Trusted messengers are also the ones that people listen to.

Sometimes, it's a local government official, like a mayor or health officer. Government officials who have interacted with the general public and have shown they value and put the public's interest first can do well with messaging and public education. Other times, being a government official can work against you. Residents can resent government decisions or confuse what government actually does.

With such a large endeavor of the COVID-19 vaccine, it's important to understand and utilize these trusted messengers. The face of a trusted messenger in a small or local community can be:

- An elder—someone who has lived experience and can give advice on what they've learned.
- A religious leader—someone who looks after the community's spiritual and religious well being.
- A doctor or healthcare professional—someone who puts the health of their community as their focus.
- A nonprofit organization—an agency that has put money, food or resources back into the community.
- A fire or police department—public servants who risk their lives for the residents they serve.
- A teacher—someone who offers guidance and dedication and gives youth the power of education.
- The matriarch of a family—someone respected within a family that has guided multiple generations.

Since trusted messengers come in different roles and ages, it is important to reach out to as many trusted messengers within a community as possible and to answer their questions, be transparent and equip them with as many resources as possible, including contacts of organizations and government in their community.

Trusted messengers often become the 'local face' of an issue, for example the COVID-19 vaccine. It's important to note that these trusted messengers are the ones who are putting their authority and influence on the line if they decide to help in this outreach so the utmost respect should be provided to them. It is equally as important, if not more so, to trust that these messengers will know the best way to reach their communities and to not command or direct them. These trusted messengers are the local authority and they know what is best and when it's best to talk to or share with their residents.



Messages can be tailored to each messenger's mission, faith or expertise, like:

- Government: "The COVID vaccine allows us to continue our public service work so that programs continue to run."
- Nonprofit: "The COVID vaccine means that your community can keep getting resources like food."
- School teacher: "The COVID vaccine means that we can start transitioning to in person teaching so that our children don't fall back even more and get the education they deserve."
- Fire fighter: "The COVID vaccine means that in an emergency, I am healthy and ready to help you."



# KEY MESSAGES



Key messages are the foundation of any communications strategy and should be used in as many communications activities as possible. Key messages are not taglines. They are the essence of what we wish to communicate with our public. Key messages are the ways in which our strategies take physical shape and action. Key messages should be concise, strategic, relevant, relatable, tailored, and simple. Additionally, key messages should be carefully crafted to help form the understanding and actions of our public and be building blocks for future messages. Additional key messages can be added later. Each key message below identifies 1-5 supporting statements.

## KEY MESSAGE 1: THE VACCINE HAS BEEN EXTENSIVELY EVALUATED.

1. The shorter timeline for this vaccine impacted cost but did not impact effectiveness.
  - A. The [Pfizer vaccine is 95% effective](#) against COVID-19
  - B. The [Moderna vaccine is 94% effective](#) against COVID-19.
2. Multiple health care leaders and experts have [review/vetted the vaccine](#).

## KEY MESSAGE 2: YOUR HEALTH AND SAFETY ARE IMPORTANT TO US.

1. The vaccine does [not give you COVID-19 or use the live virus that causes COVID-19](#). The vaccine is mRNA-based, which is a new way to trigger the immune system.
2. You'll be able to find out when we are in each phase of the vaccine distribution ([website link](#)).
3. Our local health experts have reviewed the vaccine in detail.
4. You can sign up to tell [the CDC](#) if you get any side effects from the COVID-19 vaccine.
5. [Studies](#) will be done to ensure the vaccine is safe for pregnant women and children.

## KEY MESSAGE 3: I TRUST THE VACCINE AND WILL TAKE IT.

1. If residents see different trusted messengers in their community either committed to taking the vaccine, or actually getting it, it will build trust for others in the community to take it as well.
  - A. Show images of different trusted messengers saying they will take the vaccine.
  - B. Take photos of different trusted messengers actually getting the vaccine (live).

## KEY MESSAGE 4: THE MORE PEOPLE THAT TAKE THE VACCINE THE BETTER.

1. The vaccine will be prioritized based on level of risk for contracting COVID-19.
2. People will still need to wear a mask and physical distance until the majority of the population gets the vaccine.
3. The vaccine is one step towards getting back to "normal" and economic recovery.

## KEY MESSAGE 5: THE COVID-19 VACCINE IS FREE/LOW-COST AND EASY TO GET.

1. You don't need to miss out on income or pay additional childcare to get the vaccine.
2. Yolo County is providing multiple sites for people to get the vaccine, including drive-thru clinics.
3. The vaccine has no out of pocket cost.
4. You can get the vaccine even if you do or do not have healthcare insurance.

# TIMELINE



## VACCINE TIMELINE

Due to the limited supply of vaccines at the beginning of the distribution process, certain groups and industries will be prioritized first, based on their level of exposure and health risk for getting COVID-19. The next page provides a graphic with the vaccine distribution timeline, though it may change as more information is provided about the groups and timing of each Phase.

### CDC Resources:

- [Who Gets the Vaccine First?](#)
- [Phased Allocation of COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- [How the CDC is making COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendations](#)

### CDPH Resources:

- [Allocation Guidelines for Phase 1A](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccine Page](#)

## MESSAGING AND COLLATERAL TIMELINE

For more info on the key messages listed, see page 8. For the infographics visit: <https://bit.ly/YoloCOVID-19>.

### December:

- Inform administration and key staff within organization of key messages, timelines, etc.
- Start to connect with partners, local groups, and trusted messengers
- Develop collaterals and materials; translate as needed
- Begin Key Message 1 (The vaccine has been extensively evaluated)
- Launch infographics (i.e. timeline, who's in Phase 1A, why healthcare first, is the vaccine free)

### January:

- Begin Key Message 2 (Your health and safety are important to us) and continue Key Message 1
- Share infographics (i.e. how do I protect myself until I get the vaccine, who's in Phase 1B/1C, which vaccine are we getting, are there side effects)
- Continue to connect with partners and local groups/messengers

### February:

- Begin Key Message 3 (I trust the vaccine and will take it) and continue Key Messages 1 and 2
- Share infographics (i.e. do I still need to wear a mask, how do I get the vaccine)
- Create more infographics as vaccine distribution evolves and moves into Phase 2

### March:

- Begin Key Message 4 (the more people that take the vaccine the better) and likely Key Message 5 (the COVID-19 vaccine is free/low-cost and easy to get) and continue Key Messages 1, 2 and 3
- Continue to share infographics and create more for Phase 3

### April:

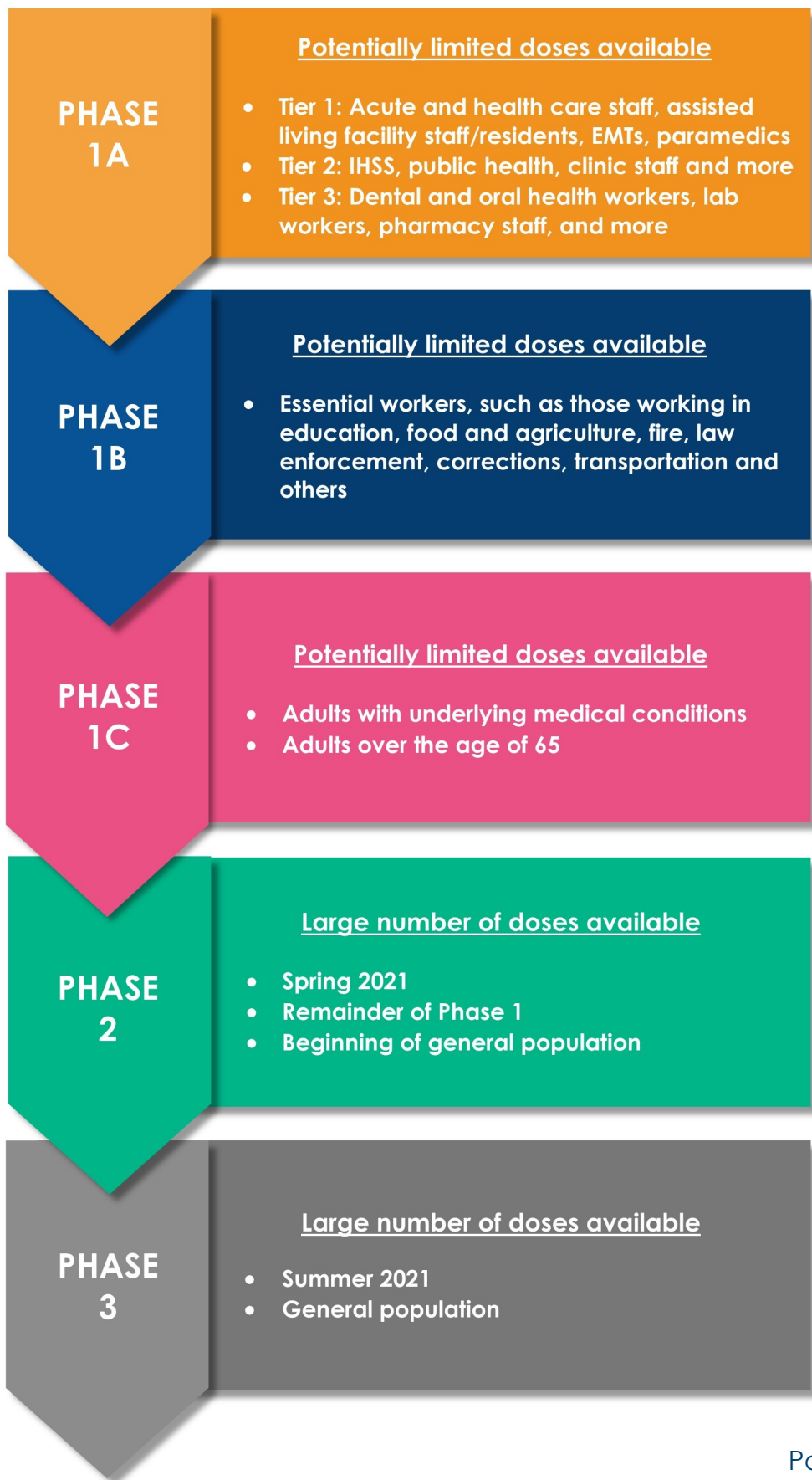
- Continue to share and create infographics
- Continue to push all 5 key messages

# Vaccine Distribution Timeline

Please note that the timeline and listed groups may change at any time based on recommendations by the CDC and the California Department of Public Health.



As of Dec 2020



# TASKS



Dividing the workload is a crucial element of any plan and should be distributed based on specialization or experience. However, tasks are not set in stone and can be flexible and adaptable, therefore you may see the same task across agencies or levels.

## COUNTY:

- Create graphics, materials and videos.
- Translate Yolo County materials into Spanish and/or Russian.
- Schedule which messages go out and when.
- Assist with funding or printing ads or collateral (if available).
- Connect partners to each other. Create networks.
- Post on social media (Facebook and Twitter) and NextDoor (countywide).
- Engage with community leaders/trusted messengers.
- Answer questions from the public and partners.

## CITIES/SCHOOLS/NONPROFITS/HEALTHCARE

- Assist with translation or media, if needed.
- Share key messages with staff and the public.
- Get connected to other partners.
- Post or re-share on social media accounts.
- Help with questions from the public or staff.
- Reaffirm or renew interest with the public.
- Additional tasks as needed or have expertise with.

## LOCAL LEADERS/TRUSTED MESSENGERS

- Get information from city/county/partners.
- Assist with translation, if needed.
- Share information with the public in manner of your choosing/expertise.
- Help answer questions from the public.
- Reaffirm or renew interest with the public.
- Additional tasks as needed or have expertise with.





# COLLATERAL



The County will provide a clearinghouse of materials and graphics that partners and agencies can use in multiple languages and formats. Currently, the clearinghouse lives in a Google Drive at: <https://bit.ly/YoloCOVID-19>. Please check this Drive often as materials will be added and translated. Please bookmark this page.

In addition the Google Drive will have a social media calendar of most items that will get posted on the County's social media account so that you can help amplify or reshare posts that best fit your agency's mission or social media management.

Here is the link for the CDC's COVID-19 Vaccination Communication Toolkit:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/health-systems-communication-toolkit.html>

Here is the link for the CA Department of Public Health's 'Vaccinate all 58' Toolkit:  
<https://toolkit.covid19.ca.gov/partners/>

**COVID-19 VACCINE**  
**Why Healthcare First?**

Healthcare workers were prioritized by the CDC if there were limited supplies of the vaccine.

**WHY:** Healthcare workers are on the front lines of the pandemic and at risk of being exposed to COVID-19 each day on the job. Vaccinating healthcare workers first also protects our healthcare capacity and provides continued key services for patients.

**WHO:** Healthcare workers and unpaid workers who serve patients and have the potential for exposure to patients.

<https://www.yolocounty.org/coronavirus-vaccine>

**LA VACUNA DEL COVID-19 ESTÁ AQUÍ**

**MANTENTE INFORMADO. SIGUE USANDO MASCARILLA.**

- Validada por los principales expertos médicos del país por su seguridad y eficacia
- Proporcionada sin costo
- Plan de distribución por fases basado en el riesgo y el nivel de exposición
- Ampliamente disponible más adelante en 2021

[covid19.ca.gov/es/vaccines](https://covid19.ca.gov/es/vaccines)

**Vaccinate ALL 58**

**I GOT MY COVID-19 VACCINE!**

**I got my COVID-19 vaccine!**

**¡YA OBTUVE MI VACUNA DE COVID19!**