



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 19, 2021

CONTACT:

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

press@cityofchicago.org

MAYOR LIGHTFOOT AND CDPH ANNOUNCE SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN RACIAL EQUITY IN VACCINE DISTRIBUTION

Half of vaccine administered in the most recent week went to Black or Latinx Chicagoans

CHICAGO – Racial equity has been the driving force behind the city's COVID-19 vaccination roll-out and Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and the Chicago Department of Public Health today announced significant improvement in the percentage of vaccine administered to Chicagoans of color. These improvements are the result of the City being laser-focused on ensuring equity in its COVID response and vaccine distribution, and the work it has been doing with many community partners including through the Racial Equity Rapid Response Team (RERRT) and its Protect Chicago Plus initiative.

Early in the vaccine roll-out, in phase 1a when the focus was on healthcare workers and long-term care facility staff and residents, only 18% of COVID vaccines were going to Black or Latinx Chicagoans. Now, data from the most recent week shows that 50% of first dose COVID vaccine went to Black or Latinx Chicagoans.

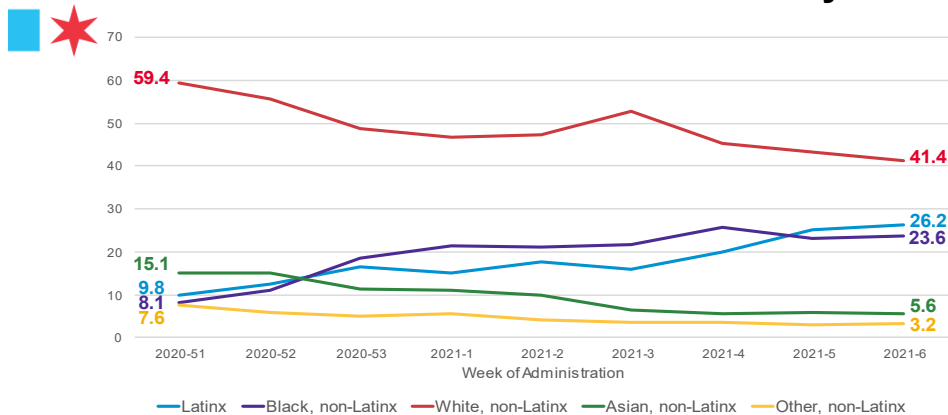
"Over the past month, we have doubled down on our efforts to not only drive vaccines into communities that need them most but ensure that our vaccination rates match the demographics of our city," said Mayor Lightfoot. "The significant progress we have made is undoubtedly thanks to our equity-based vaccine strategy—which includes a number of initiatives, individuals, organizations and community engagement tactics. Though we still have a long way to go before we can fully achieve equity, this progress serves as an important reminder that the surest path to truly recovering and healing from this terrible pandemic is one that is built with equity at its foundation."

In December, the race/ethnicity of individuals who had received a first dose of the vaccine was as follows: Latinx 9.8%; Black, non-Latinx 8.1%; White, non-Latinx 59.4%; Asian, non-Latinx 15.1%. Since then, the City has seen major improvements in percent of first doses administered and is closer to reflecting the racial/ethnic



demographics of the city. For doses administered in the most recent week these numbers are: Latinx 26.2%; Black, non-Latinx 23.6%, White, non-Latinx 41.4%; Asian non-Latinx 5.6%.

Percent of First Doses Administered by Race Ethni



Data reported through 2/11/21. Percentage calculated among those with known race ethnicity.

“From the beginning of the pandemic we’ve focused our attention and resources to those communities where we were seeing the highest case rates and the greatest number of deaths, and unfortunately they mirrored the inequities we see in society overall,” said CDPH Commissioner Allison Arwady, M.D. “We’ve made good progress in these same areas with lowering case rates and now with ensuring vaccine is getting where it’s needed most, and that work will continue.”

Cumulative data since the start of the vaccine rollout shows the race/ethnicity of individuals who have received a first dose in Chicago is: Latinx 18.1%; Black, non-Latinx 19.1%; White, non-Latinx 40.8%; Asian, non-Latinx 6.7%; other, non-Latinx 3.6%; Unknown 11.8%.

Early on in the pandemic, the city created the RERRT to deploy resources to the most impacted communities and connect with community partners on the ground to share information about COVID-19, distribute personal protective equipment and work to stem the spread of the virus. This work has continued with the vaccine, and the City last month also launched its Protect Chicago Plus program, which targets vaccine supply and additional resources to 15 neighborhoods that have been most burdened by the COVID-19 pandemic, based on the City’s COVID vulnerability index (CCVI).

As part of Protect Chicago Plus, the City is collaborating with local community groups in each priority neighborhood to establish a dedicated vaccination strategy



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



that will include a fixed vaccination site and special vaccine events, hosted by trusted community members such as faith institutions and Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). The City allocates additional first doses of vaccine in the Protect Chicago Plus community each week to support these events, which are open only to local residents.

“This vaccination data is a step in the right direction and encouraging news for those of us who have witnessed firsthand the devastating impact of COVID in our communities,” said Dan Fulwiler, President and CEO of Esperanza Health Centers. “Since opening our newest vaccination center in Gage Park, we at Esperanza have been both heartened and humbled by the incredible work of our local community groups like the Southwest Organizing Project and the Gage Park Latinx Council, and by the wonderful support from the city of Chicago that is allowing us to bring vaccine to those who need it most.”

The first community targeted under Protect Chicago Plus was Belmont Cragin, where the City partnered with Northwest Side Housing Center, Oak Street Health and Lurie Children’s Hospital to host vaccination clinics and register residents for vaccination over the past couple weekends. This week, the City opened temporary vaccination clinics in Gage Park, in partnership with Esperanza Health Centers, and in North Landale, in partnership with Lawndale Christian Health Center.

Looking ahead, the City will be collaborating with community organizations, faith leaders, health care providers and employers in order to deliver successful vaccine clinics and events in the remaining Protect Chicago Plus communities: Archer Heights, Austin, Back of the Yards, Chicago Lawn, Englewood, Humboldt Park, Little Village, Montclare, Roseland, South Deering, Washington Heights, and West Englewood.

Additional information can be found at [Chicago.gov/covidvax](https://chicago.gov/covidvax).

###