



Protect Chicago Plus Frequently Asked Questions February 12, 2021

Equity drives all vaccine distribution in the City of Chicago. As we strive to vaccinate the entire city while faced with a limited supply of vaccine, our commitment to equity is more important than ever. Equity is not only part of our COVID-19 strategy, equity is our strategy.

- The City has worked to enroll doctor's offices, hospitals, clinics, and FQHCs as vaccination sites in our hardest hit communities. We also provide additional support and outreach to healthcare providers in these communities to help them increase capacity to provide vaccination for the community.
- We deploy vaccination strike teams prioritizing critical populations in these areas (e.g. seniors, congregate living settings, employers that have high outbreak rates).
- Additionally, we launched the *Protect Chicago Plus* program and will dedicate vaccine supply and additional resources to the 15 neighborhoods that have been most burdened by the COVID-19 pandemic based on the [City's COVID vulnerability index \(CCVI\)](#), to get these communities at or above the Citywide vaccination rate.

What is Protect Chicago Plus?

Protect Chicago Plus is a targeted vaccine distribution program designed to ensure vaccine reaches the individuals and communities most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. It relies on three primary strategies:

1. **Dedicate vaccine supply and additional resources** to the 15 neighborhoods that have been most burdened by the COVID-19 pandemic based on the City's COVID vulnerability index (CCVI), to get these communities at or above the Citywide vaccination rate.
2. Partner with local community stakeholders to **develop tailored vaccination and engagement strategies** to help community residents get vaccinated. Strategies include dedicated community vaccine clinics, outreach teams, and special events, to reach deeply into communities and touch those who may be disconnected from more traditional vaccine administration channels.
3. **Ensure vaccine gets to the people who need it most within each community by removing any and all barriers to vaccinating as many people as we can**, even if this means accelerating through the phases. In addition to the priority groups identified in 1a, 1b, and 1c, other groups, as identified by local community leaders, will be eligible to get vaccinated too.



Why is Protect Chicago Plus needed?

Protect Chicago Plus is our chance to both change the map and end the pandemic. By dedicating resources and vaccine supply to increase vaccine uptake in the hardest hit communities, we also reduce COVID-19 spread across all of Chicago and can reopen more quickly and safely.

Which communities are included in Protect Chicago Plus?

The first 15 community areas that are being targeted through Protect Chicago Plus are Archer Heights, Austin, Back of the Yards, Belmont Cragin, Chicago Lawn, Englewood, Gage Park, Humboldt Park, Little Village, Montclare, North Lawndale, Roseland, South Deering, Washington Heights, and West Englewood.

How were the 15 neighborhoods selected?

These were the communities that ranked highest on the City's [COVID Vulnerability Index \(CCVI\)](#), which uses metrics to identify communities that are most burdened by COVID during the pandemic and are uniquely vulnerable to barriers to COVID-19 vaccine uptake.

How does Protect Chicago Plus work?

Within each community, the City will partner with anchor organizations to create a neighborhood task force made up of diverse stakeholders, including grassroots activist organizations, local businesses, faith leaders and local community health providers, such as federally qualified health centers (FQHCs).

The City will work with each task force to establish a dedicated vaccination strategy for their community, which will include a fixed vaccination site and special vaccine events, hosted by trusted community institutions. The City will arrange to set up one temporary community vaccination clinic, operated by a healthcare partner, to support a surge of vaccine supply. The City will allocate additional vaccine doses for mobile vaccine events in the community each week.

How will community members learn about vaccine availability?

Within each community, the City will partner with community-based organizations and local leaders to identify unique opportunities to share information and assist with vaccination appointment scheduling. This will include things like door-to-door outreach; face-to-face outreach in grocery stores, laundromats, and other high-traffic areas; phone and text banking and more.

In these priority communities, will the City still be following the CDC guided phases for vaccine distribution?

With Protect Chicago Plus we are aiming at getting the communities that have endured the heaviest burden of COVID-19 at or above the Citywide vaccination rate. Our goal is to vaccinate



as many community members as we can by removing any and all barriers, even if this means accelerating through the phases. By increasing vaccine uptake in the hardest hit communities, we reduce the risk of further COVID-19 spread across all of Chicago.

What is the timeline for Protect Chicago Plus?

Protect Chicago Plus communities will be activated in phases over the next six to eight weeks. Each neighborhood campaign is expected to last eight weeks. The preliminary schedule is:

- Belmont Cragin (early February)
- Little Village, Gage Park, North Lawndale (mid-February)
- Montclare, Englewood, West Englewood (mid to late February)
- Austin, Back of the Yards, Archer Heights (early March)
- Roseland, Washington Heights, South Deering (mid-March)
- Humboldt Park, Chicago Lawn (late March)

How was Protect Chicago Plus developed?

Protect Chicago Plus is a continuation of the *Protect Chicago* initiative, which was launched in November 2020 to mitigate a second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in Chicago, building on successful get-out-the-vote and census efforts. As part of the initiative, community-based organizations, and volunteers that have knocked on more than 400,000 doors in our hardest-hit areas, linking people to information, testing, and now to vaccine and other resources.

Protect Chicago Plus builds on the work of Mayor Lightfoot’s Racial Equity Rapid Response Team, an initiative that was integral to the city in deploying resources to the communities most impacted by COVID-19.

Learn more at chicago.gov/ProtectChicago.