

## **NLC and YMCAs Partner to Increase Vaccine Confidence and Access**

The National League of Cities (NLC) and YMCA of the USA (Y-USA) are launching a new initiative to increase confidence in and access to the COVID-19 vaccine. Through new partnerships between city officials and local YMCA community leaders, we hope to build upon existing local vaccine-education efforts to address vaccine hesitancy and remove barriers to vaccine access, with an emphasis on communities with low vaccination rates. Many YMCAs across the country already are supporting this effort in three ways:

Direct-to-Consumer Education: Strategies to improve vaccine education, counter vaccine misinformation, and increase vaccine confidence, with the goal of reaching underserved communities that are often underrepresented in existing vaccine-education campaigns.

New Partnership Development: Efforts aimed at identifying stakeholder groups within communities who are viewed as leaders and credible sources of information among the populations being prioritized due to low vaccination rates.

Vaccine Access Barriers: Prioritizing approaches for ensuring local leaders, health care partners, and other community-based organizations are aligning resources to remove barriers to equitable vaccine access.

NLC and the YMCA recognize that vaccinations are the best tool for ensuring cities, schools, and workplaces are open and can stay open, while lowering rates of virus spread and preventable death. This joint initiative is designed to improve coordination among local YMCAs, city leaders, and public health, and better align the resources needed to address challenges and remove barriers that inhibit vaccine confidence and access.

The initiative will help answer the following key questions: Who is vaccine hesitant in my city/community and how can I reach them? Who can make the most compelling case to reach those who are vaccine hesitant? How can local leaders ensure transportation and other resources are deployed where they are most needed? How can we be certain we are aligned with core public health messages?

**We are actively recruiting cities to join this effort!** If your city is interested in more formally partnering with your [local Y that is participating](#), please contact them. If you have additional questions or would like to formally be introduced, please contact Mary Morcos at [morcos@nlc.org](mailto:morcos@nlc.org).

You can expect the following resources as part of this initiative:

- Enhanced ability to develop meaningful partnerships and align critical resources.
- Robust communication support to reach communities hardest hit by COVID-19.
- Coaching and technical assistance to support local vaccination efforts.

For questions contact: YMCA of the USA: Jennifer Gilburg, Manager, Movement Engagement and Program Approaches at [jennifer.gilburg@ymca.net](mailto:jennifer.gilburg@ymca.net) NLC: Mary Morcos, Fellow, Health & Wellness, at [Morcos@nlc.org](mailto:Morcos@nlc.org)

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this important effort.

Sincerely,



Clarence E. Anthony  
CEO and Executive Director  
National League of Cities



Kevin Washington  
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