

# STEPS TO INCREASE EMPLOYEE COVID-19 VACCINATION RATES

## Effective Strategies for Employers

*This evidence-based checklist offers a multi-pronged plan to keep your business running smoothly and your employees safe and healthy.*



### **Provide educational materials to employees about the vaccine - consider the framing, the location and their concerns**

- Educational campaigns that describe the benefits of COVID-19 vaccination and dispel common myths about the vaccine help increase vaccination rates among employees.
- Send your staff surveys in advance of creating educational materials for them. This can help you to determine your employees' common concerns about vaccines and develop targeted, interactive education materials.
- Consider posting materials throughout your offices or distributing materials to department "champions" - employees who have volunteered to take a leadership and promotional role in your vaccination information program. Flyers, emails and voicemails are options to reach all employees in different settings.
- Promotional materials may have more success if a vaccination campaign is framed as a community initiative rather than a health program.
- Finally, make sure that your employees know that the vaccine is free. No-cost shots may motivate employees to decide to get vaccinated. It is important to note, however, that this has not been shown to be as strong a motivator among healthcare workers. Cost may be a barrier to some employees, so publicize that the vaccines are available at no charge.



### **Ensure support for vaccination from senior leadership and departmental ambassadors**

- The more workplace leaders who engage on behalf of your campaign, the better. In some cases, support from senior leadership has been shown to help increase seasonal flu vaccination rates from 45% to 72%.
- Using department "champions" to promote vaccination uptake and vaccination events across the company is more effective than relying on one infection control staff member or related department to communicate. Department champions can help monitor their department's vaccination status to target deficiencies and recognize successes.
- Support from leadership can take many forms: reinforcement of education, encouragement to get vaccinated, allowing breaks in the workday or time off to receive and recover from a vaccine and modeling timely vaccination themselves.

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For more information and related resources, visit  
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### Help employees find their most convenient location for vaccination

- Workers are more likely to get vaccinated if the vaccine location and appointment is convenient and the process is easy to figure out. While most employers have no control over vaccine distribution or administration, education campaigns can be used to highlight local vaccination locations and to help employees understand how to make an appointment.
- In the absence of a worksite vaccination event, promotional materials can include the location of participating doctor's offices, drive-through vaccination sites and other locations. Mailed flyers can be even more effective with "nudges" to plan for vaccination.
- Employees who received flyers about flu vaccination clinics were found to be more likely to get vaccinated when prompted to write down the date and time they planned to get the flu shot, as opposed to employees who were prompted about date only or received no prompt at all. Flyers could be emailed or sent through interoffice mail or the post.



### Use written "opt-out" statements for employees who choose to not get vaccinated

- Implementing "opt-out" statements (signed documents in which an employee attests that they have been educated about the vaccine and are choosing not to take it) can significantly increase vaccine uptake.
- These statements can reinforce the rationale of workplace vaccination and the importance of getting vaccinated, ultimately educating employees and persuading them to take the shot.
- "Opt-out" forms, if they include a multiple choice or free text option on why workers are not taking the vaccine, can help you to understand barriers to vaccination and tailor interventions to their needs.
- Finally, making the decision to forego a vaccine into an active process, rather than a passive refusal, may motivate employees to change their minds and decide to vaccinate.
- In one study, among staff who did not provide direct care in a medical center, requiring a thorough process to decline flu vaccination and deliver the "opt-out" statement to occupational health officials was much more successful than a rewards-based approach.



### Provide rewards or other incentives to those who complete vaccination

- Incentives can be effective if they are included as part of a package of interventions but not as a stand-alone tactic.
- Incentives may include a small (e.g., \$5) reward for each employee, hosting a lunch for the department with the highest vaccination rates, raffles with a >10% chance of winning a prize or tying target vaccination rates to annual bonuses. Raffles for a single prize have not been determined to be effective.

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