



# The COVID-19 Vaccine: Your Business, Your Employees, and Your Community

PRESENTED BY:



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Main Street fully reopening is critical to putting our economy on the path to recovery and to date, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized three COVID-19 vaccines that are free to all individuals who want one. Recent survey data shows that 61% of LGBTQ small employers say it is very important that their employees receive a vaccine. As a small business owner, you can play a critical role in championing the vaccine with your employees and in your community, and this tip sheet provides guidance on how you can do both.

## You and Your Business

Clinical studies show that the vaccines save lives and will keep people out of the hospital if they do contract COVID. The sooner more people receive a vaccine, the sooner your business and others will be able to return to full operating capacity and bring your community back together. As you decide how to proceed with the vaccine and your business, here are important things to keep in mind:

- 1. Be knowledgeable about the vaccines:** Educate yourself on the safety and efficacy of the vaccine and why it is important that people receive it. Spend a few minutes reviewing the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's \(CDC\) website](#), which will answer the most common questions about the vaccines and help you explain why the benefits of taking the vaccine outweigh the risks.
- 2. Do not underestimate your influence:** Your actions regarding the vaccine will have influence on your employees and your community. Small businesses are also the most trusted institution in the United States and small business owners, in particular business owners of color, are a trusted voice to their workers and in their communities. Employees often look to their employers for information and half of small employers reported fielding questions from their workers.
- 3. Share your experience:** If you received one of the COVID vaccines, please share with others your experience and why getting it is worth it for you and your community. However, do not share a photo of your vaccine card on social media since it includes sensitive personal information.

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## Your Employees

You may not have a full-time human resources (HR) staff or any HR support at all. However, creating and implementing a COVID-19 vaccine plan can be straightforward with the right guidance.

**1. Create a COVID-19 vaccine plan:** In developing your plan, you will need to review state or local vaccine policies and maybe seek legal advice. Consider incentives, such as paid time off (PTO) for your team to get the shot(s) and recover from side effects (if they occur).

**2. Implement your plan:** When you finish creating your plan, communicate it to your employees both verbally and in writing. Also, be sure to continue following the [CDC's guidance](#) on wearing masks and social distancing even after all of your employees are vaccinated. You can also keep your employees apprised of updates on vaccine eligibility and where to register using [VaccineFinder.org](#).

**3. Talk with your employees:** Your employees will likely have questions about the vaccine so offering a way to have open discussions and share information is one way to hear and alleviate people's concerns. The CDC has a [new resource](#) on what to expect before, during, and after your vaccine, which can be helpful for you and your employees throughout the process. During these discussions, it is also important to stress that COVID vaccines are free and people do not need insurance, cash, or a credit card to get vaccinated -- you don't have to worry about any co-payments, deductibles, or receiving a bill to get one.

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## Your Community

Beyond your business, there are ways to assist with vaccine promotion and distribution in your community that do not require much of your time. There are three main areas where you can provide this support in collaboration with your local health department and other government agencies.

**1. Be An Ambassador:** You can be an ambassador and help reduce vaccine hesitancy among your friends, family, and peers. For example, you can encourage your local chamber of commerce, Rotary Club, or church to host an educational conversation on the importance of the vaccines.

**2. Community Communications:** If you're so inclined, using your business to spread awareness is another way you can assist. Ways to do this range from donating advertising space, communicating with your customers, and partnering with your local health department.

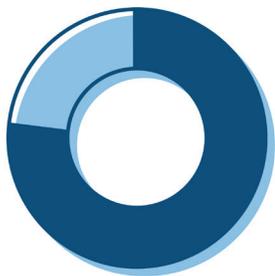
**3. Logistical Support:** Your business can provide logistical support through efforts such as donating supplies, including personal protection equipment or water or snacks to vaccination sites, offering vacant space to assist with distribution, and giving PTO to employees who volunteer at mass vaccination sites or for outreach efforts to get people signed up for the vaccine.

## Make the Small Business Vaccine Leader Pledge

You can also play a critical role in championing the vaccine with your employees and in your community by pledging to be a SMALL BUSINESS VACCINE LEADER. To learn more about the Small Business Vaccine Leader Pledge, go to: [www.reimaginemainstreet.org](http://www.reimaginemainstreet.org).

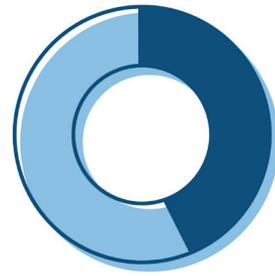
## What Other Business Owners Are Saying

A survey conducted by Reimagine Main Street in 2021 discovered that:



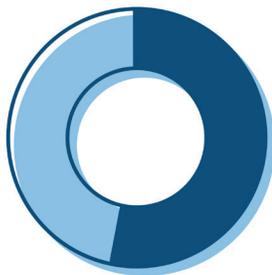
**77%**

of LGBTQ small employers plan to take the COVID vaccine when it becomes available



**45%**

of LGBTQ small employers have relied on external resources to discuss vaccinations with employees without violating health privacy laws



**51%**

of LGBTQ small employers plan to give employees PTO to get vaccinated



68% of LGBTQ small employers are working with their local health departments or chambers of commerce on pandemic response and another 21% are not currently working with the local health department or a chamber of commerce on vaccines but would like to do so

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## Resources

There are many resources that can assist you in this area and below are a few key examples.

- [CDC's COVID-19 Vaccination Center](#)
- [Reimagine Main Street Vaccine Resources](#)
- [U.S. Chamber of Commerce Vaccine Digital Resources Center](#)
- [FDA's Vaccine Resource Center](#)

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