



PUBLIC HEALTH IS WHERE YOU ARE!



PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK

April 4 - 8, 2022

DAY 5: Accessibility: Closing the Health Equity Gap for COVID-19 Vaccinations

Friday, April 8, 2022 , 11:30 am – 4:30 pm

Background

The City of Palmdale is a part of LA County's 5th Supervisorial District (SD5) and has a population of 148,000 people age 5+. SD5 is the County's largest district — spanning 2,785 square miles, which includes 20 cities and 83 unincorporated communities in the San Gabriel, San Fernando, La Crescenta, Santa Clarita and Antelope Valleys. As of 2/10/22, the City of Palmdale has had 52,070 cases of COVID-19 (32,755 cases per 100,000 residents), resulting in 420 deaths (264 deaths per 100,000 residents) since the beginning of the pandemic. Palmdale currently has approximately 67.5% of its' residents fully vaccinated, 74.4% partially vaccinated with 1+ dose. In unincorporated areas of Palmdale, as low as 41.4% of the population age 5+ are fully vaccinated. Compared to other areas of LA County, SD5, specifically in Palmdale, case rates are higher in this region, while vaccination rates have remained lower than other areas, further exacerbating the inequities that exist there.

Health Equity Gaps Exist

One of the most disturbing aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic is the disproportionate harm that it has caused to historically marginalized groups. COVID-19 has disproportionately affected racial and ethnic minority groups, and race and ethnicity have been associated with disease severity. Additionally, there are wide gaps in public understanding about disparities in COVID-19 mortality (death). Many may recognize that older people and people with chronic health conditions are more likely to die from COVID-19 than younger people and those without other conditions; however less people recognize the disparities between social and racial/ethnic groups. Several factors contribute to this region's health inequities, compared to other parts of LA County. Existing issues include inaccessibility to COVID-19 testing and vaccinations – such as geographic availability, network of providers, hours and days of operation, transportation challenges and lack of resources available to increase community knowledge to motivate people to get vaccinated. Another reason why gaps exist may be related to perpetuated misperceptions that some residents have about COVID

vaccines and boosters, demonstrating a need for trusted community organizations and experts to address and improve public knowledge.

Goal

Given the effectiveness of the vaccines, we are relieved to see gradual increases in vaccine coverage levels. To better protect against COVID-19, we need to:

- Increase vaccination rates across all younger age groups, particularly for 5- to 11-year-olds in Palmdale where only 29% have received at least 1 dose of the vaccine, and only 21% are considered fully vaccinated (data as of 2/10/22).
- Encourage people to get a booster dose. Everyone 12 years of age and older without a contraindication is eligible for a booster, but as of January 30th, only 37% of those fully vaccinated had received an additional or booster dose.

COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective and are recommended for everyone ages 5 and older to help protect against COVID-19. Public Health encourages all LA County residents to get vaccinated and boosted when eligible.

Efforts & Strides in Addressing Inaccessibility

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH), as well as local community organizations have been collaborating throughout this pandemic and rallied to strengthen a more robust network to increase access to vaccines to the public. From mobile vaccine teams that are dispatched to harder-to-reach neighborhoods, County Point-of-Dispensing sites (POD) that are open for walk-ins and appointments 7 days a week from 12– 7pm, to conducting targeted outreach to increase public education and awareness of these issues, DPH and their community partners are working tirelessly to meet people where they are at.

- **Mobile Vaccination Teams DPH**, in collaboration with multiple partners is providing COVID-19 mobile vaccination events at senior residential developments, senior centers, churches, community organizations, workplaces, and other locations throughout the County. Mobile





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Vaccination Teams bring vaccinations into neighborhoods to reach people who may have limited ability or time to get to one of the established vaccination sites. These teams are working with partners such as markets, stores and Metro partners to establish some standing mobile vaccine sites at locations that are central to these communities.

- **Point-of-Dispensing (POD)** POD sites were set up to increase vaccination efforts. PODs are a proven response mechanism to quickly distribute preventive medicine or vaccinations to large numbers of people during a public health emergency. All POD sites are ADA compliant to assure access to all clients. A POD was initially set up at Six Flags Magic Mountain in early 2021 to serve the community members of SD5/Antelope Valley and moved to Palmdale Oasis Park and Market Street Center after its closure. As of 2/17/2022, a total of 208,901 doses have been administered through the SD5 PODs (past and present sites). Collectively, since early 2021, DPH has provided over 1.4 million COVID-19 vaccinations at our large scale and community POD sites across the County.
- **Outreach** DPH staff are increasing community awareness and confidence in COVID-19 vaccinations by distributing flyers to communities surrounding POD sites. Staff are making sure to address and dispel myths about COVID-19 vaccines. As of 2/20/2022, staff at the Palmdale POD have visited 1,383 venues as part of these outreach efforts. Currently, they added the Vax-on-the-Go outreach strategy which continues to include health education materials distribution as well as offering COVID-19 and flu vaccines on-the-spot at offsite locations (near the PODs) to make receiving the vaccine easier for all. In addition, DPH has provided funding support to local community organizations through the Community Health Worker Outreach Initiative (CHWOI) to elevate outreach efforts and engagement.
- **Call Center** The DPH Vaccine Call Center (833)540-0473 is available to residents with disabilities or without computer access between 8:00 am and 8:30 pm, 7 days a week, for assistance with appointments and arranging free rides to and from vaccination sites. No smartphone app needed.

Taking Action

Getting through this pandemic requires everyone to have a role. To get involved:

- As a community/local organization:
 - o Host a local vaccination clinic
 - o Encourage your constituents to get vaccinated
 - o Raise awareness & provide education on the benefits of getting vaccinated
 - o Address myths about COVID-19 vaccines
- As an individual:
 - o Get vaccinated yourself!
 - o Encourage your friends & families to also get fully vaccinated
 - o Become a COVID-19 ambassador

DPH will host a panel discussion for National Public Health Week 2022. DPH, along with local community-based organizations will share their experiences, lessons learned and ongoing efforts to get people vaccinated. The discussion will focus on successes/replicable practices, challenges (i.e., COVID vaccine myths and steps taken to counteract them), and what community work is still needed in the road ahead. The discussion will conclude with a commitment to further closing the gap, through newly fostered and continued partnerships. The aim of this event is to recognize the collected efforts and further collaboration to increase vaccination rates in the Antelope Valley.

COVID-19 Vaccination Schedules

Based on the type of COVID-19 vaccine you received, there are different rules for when to get your second, additional, or booster dose.

For specific details on what age groups are eligible for which vaccines, [click here](#).

Local Vaccination Sites

Here are a few local sites that are available for vaccination appointments & walk-ins:

- **Palmdale Oasis Park Recreation Center**
3850-A East Avenue S.
Palmdale, CA 93550
Tuesday-Sunday, 12-7pm
- **Market Street Center**
22900 Market St
Santa Clarita, CA 91321
Tuesday-Sunday, 12-7pm
- **Antelope Valley Health Center**
335 E. Avenue K6
Lancaster, CA 93535
Monday-Friday, 7:45am-4:30pm





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- **Tarzana Treatment Center, Inc.**
907 W. Lancaster Blvd.
Lancaster, CA 93534
Monday-Friday, 9am-3pm
- **Antelope Valley Fairgrounds – Van Dam Building**
2551 W. Avenue H
Lancaster, CA 93536
Pop-up clinics, times vary

To find more walk-in clinics and vaccinations appointments near you, please visit:
www.vaccinatelacounty.com
www.myturn.ca.gov

