The development, approval and initiation of distribution of vaccines to combat the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) represents a milestone in addressing the ongoing pandemic.

In order to ensure people can receive the vaccine in a timely manner, local and state public health officials may rely on various methods, including the employment of large-scale vaccine clinics known as Points Of Dispensing (PODs).

PODs are generally locations that have been pre-identified by local and state health officials in public health planning to serve as distribution centers for vaccines. They may include public buildings, such as government offices or schools, as well as – in some cases – community institutions that are operated by third parties, such as community centers, or even stadiums and houses of worship.

Due to the types of locations that are selected as PODs, Jewish community spaces may be asked to or volunteer to serve as POD sites.

This document, while not meant to replace federal, state, and local guidance, is intended to help the Jewish community navigate this next phase of the COVID-19 response in a safe and secure manner should organizations support vaccine distribution efforts.

Distribution Methods

Vaccine distribution plans have been developed, up to this point, based on a variety factors, including but not limited to: age, profession, and place of residence (i.e., long-term care facilities and college dormitories). Additionally, distribution methods may vary from state to state and even from locality to locality. It is important to note that the list below is not an exhaustive list of distribution methods but instead addresses, broadly, the types of distribution methods your organization may encounter.

Open PODs

Open PODs are vaccination sites open to the general public. These sites are often operated by the local health department and/or organizations that have agreed to assist with the distribution. Due to the population size that these PODs serve, these are the largest and most complex of the distribution methods. Open PODs require large, unobstructed space and will likely operate out of spaces such as school gymnasiums and event centers.

Closed PODs

Closed PODs are not open to the general public and are intended to serve only an organization and its members. These sites are usually not operated by the local health department, but by the organization's staff and members. Examples of closed PODs include private businesses, long-term care facilities, and hospitals.

Drive-thru PODS

Drive-thru PODS can be either open or closed, but instead of entering a building, clients receive their vaccinations while in their vehicles.

Safety & Security Considerations

While PODs are a novel concept and something that has not been experienced by many, through the lens of safety and security, they can be viewed similarly to special and mass gathering events. As such, many of the considerations that are applicable to special and mass gathering events can utilized for PODs with special consideration given to public health issues. Outlined below are general safety and security considerations for PODs.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Pre-Event Security. As with any mass gathering event, there is the potential that it may be targeted by those seeking to commit a crime or perpetrate a violent act. Prior to the event, coordinate with local law enforcement to discuss event security.

- **Site Security Plan.** Coordinate with relevant stakeholders such as local law enforcement and the local health department to ensure there is a site security plan for the POD. Items that should be discussed include:
  - Secure storage of the vaccine
  - Security at the entrance and exit points of the POD
  - Security within the POD
- **Pre-event Security Sweep.** Prior to allowing the first patient into the POD, ensure a security sweep of the site is conducted. This will ensure that not only are there no suspicious items and/or persons in the POD, but also that unused entrances, exits, and the pharmaceuticals are secured prior to distribution.

Continued Virus Spread. Both vaccines currently available require two doses in order to be fully effective. Additionally, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) it typically takes a few weeks for a person's body to build up immunity after receiving a vaccination. This means that a person could still spread or contract the virus after being vaccinated. The following protocols will help reduce the likelihood of infection.

- **Patient Screening.** Consider screening patients for symptoms prior to entering the main dispensing area. This could be done utilizing a screening questionnaire and is likely to be done by the staff and/or organization administering the vaccines.
- **Social Distancing and Infection Control Procedures.** Due to the fact that some carriers may be asymptomatic, it is important that social distancing and infection control procedures remain in place as outlined below.
  - Masks
  - Hand washing/sanitization
  - Appropriate spacing between people (at least 6 feet)
  - Separate entrance and exit points
- **Post-Event Sanitization.** After the vaccine clinic has ended, be sure to clean and disinfect the space.

Human and Vehicular Traffic Control. Both open and closed PODs could experience higher than average human and vehicular traffic creating both safety and security concerns.

- **Create Traffic Control Plans.** Vehicular traffic jams are safety issues as they can prohibit first responders from accessing the site in the case of an emergency. They can also prohibit emergency vehicles, such as ambulances, from exiting the site. Coordinate with local law enforcement, local health department, emergency management (if applicable), and public works to ensure there is a traffic control plan in place. *Considerations include:*
  - Utilizing designated entrance and exit points and barricading others
  - Having separate, designated parking lots for patients and staff
  - Identifying exits and entrances to be used by response partners in the event of an emergency
- **Prevent Bottlenecks.** Poor flow can create bottlenecks both inside and outside of the POD, creating numerous safety and security issues. To help reduce bottlenecks:
  - Utilize scheduled appointments and/or controlled flow methods. Controlled flow methods are strategies to limit the number of patients reporting to the POD at one time.
  - Employ flow monitors to ensure that patients are moving through the POD site efficiently.
  - Utilize separate entrance and exit points.

Adverse Reactions. While health officials have indicated that adverse reactions to either of the COVID-19 vaccines are rare, it is important to ensure there is a plan in place should a patient experience an adverse reaction to the vaccine. Considerations for the health plan include:

- Have a medical consult station staffed by a clinician (i.e., a doctor).
- Develop a patient transport plan.
- Stage an ambulance at the POD for easy transport.
- Implement an observation period for patients after the vaccine is administered.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR OPEN PODS

Access Control. Open PODs differ from closed PODs because of their openness to the general public. Often at these types of PODs, there is not an identification requirement and all who show up are served, resulting in little to no access control. In order to account for this, the following safety and security measures can be employed to limit the impact of limited access control.

- **Limit Access Points.** Ensure that the minimum number of entrances and exits are used. All unused doors, windows, and other access points should be secured.

- **Staff Entrances.** Station law enforcement or staff trained in suspicious behavior indicators at entrances.
- **Report Suspicious Behavior.** Suspicious behavior may, but does not always, indicate criminal intent. Mass vaccination clinics can be a stressful experience and may cause people to behave in a way they normally do not act. Reporting suspicious behavior ensures that whether criminal or not, the person and situation receives the attention needed in order to keep other occupants safe.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ORGANIZATION	CONTACT	PHONE	EMAIL
Insert local health department			
Insert organization health services			
Insert local law enforcement			

LOCAL HOSPITAL	PHONE	ADDRESS

Resources

- [CDC: COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- [State Vaccination Plans](#)
- Insert Local Health Department Website and/or other relevant links

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For more information, or to report an incident after notifying local law enforcement, and your Security Director, if applicable, contact:

SCN Duty Desk at 844.SCN.DESK

or email DutyDesk@SecureCommunityNetwork.org