



San Francisco Department of Public Health

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City and County of San Francisco
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SAN FRANCISCO CELEBRATES ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST COVID-19 VACCINE WITH 80% OF THE POPULATION FULLY VACCINATED

City's strategy to provide low-barrier, equitable access to vaccines through partnerships with community-based organizations, volunteers, and health systems brought us to this celebratory milestone

San Francisco, CA - The San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFPDH) announced today the one-year anniversary of the first COVID-19 vaccine administered in the City, a game-changing moment in the fight against the virus that put the City on a trajectory to recovery from the pandemic.

Since the first doses were administered, nearly 1.4 million COVID-19 vaccine doses have been given out, inoculating about 750,000 San Franciscans with the best defense against the virus. This week the City reached a new, important milestone with **80% of the total population fully vaccinated**. The achievement is the result of a year's strategic effort in partnership with community groups and health systems to make the vaccine easily accessible at nearly 100 vaccination sites throughout the City and with dedicated outreach to highly impacted communities.

"We've come a very long way since a year ago when the arrival of the COVID-19 vaccine felt like a ray of hope in the darkness," said Mayor Breed. "Here we are now with most of San Franciscans vaccinated, our businesses and schools reopened, and people gathering and celebrating the holiday season with each other once again. Our vaccination efforts show what San Francisco can do when we work together, and we can bring that same spirit and energy to other challenges facing the City."

Among our "Vaxiversary" highlights:

- 55% children ages 5-11 with at least one dose in just over a month
- 70% of Black/African Americans and over 80% of Latina/o/x fully vaccinated
- 54% of people experiencing homelessness fully vaccinated
- 600+ mobile vaccination events to the elderly, home bound individuals, people experiencing homelessness, and other vulnerable communities
- 30+ community partnerships



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“There have been very challenging times in the pandemic for all of us, especially in the beginning. Thanks to the resilient and collaborative spirit of San Franciscans who got vaccinated, we are in an immeasurably better position now in our journey to recovery,” said Director of Health, Dr. Grant Colfax. “We are immensely grateful to our health care workers, community-based organizations, and volunteers who were on the frontlines administering and delivering vaccines to ensure we were all safe. Our work is not over -- we must close the remaining gaps of unvaccinated people and get people boosted too to safely make it through the holidays and winter season.”

On December 15, 2020, amid a surge in COVID cases and hospitalizations and with a regional stay at home order limiting holiday gatherings, San Francisco received its initial 12,675 doses from state and federal allocations. First to receive the vaccines were frontline health care workers at Zuckerberg San Francisco General Hospital, as well as residents of long-term care facilities, including nursing homes.

As San Francisco waited for more supply, hundreds of City staff deployed as Disaster Service Workers to the COVID Command Center (CCC) strategized and planned on getting vaccines into as many arms as possible. This objective resulted in standing up high-volume vaccine sites throughout the city with City College of San Francisco becoming the first high volume site in January 2021, followed by Moscone Center and SF Market in the Bayview in early February. Recognizing there would be access challenges for many people getting to high-volume vaccine sites and clinics, the CCC stood up low-barrier efforts to bring vaccines more directly to people. This included dispatching mobile vaccine teams to reach our most at-risk populations, including people with disabilities and other access and functional needs, and our unsheltered residents.

“While getting vaccine to as many people as possible was important during our initial efforts, more critical was establishing equitable access with communities hardest hit by the virus,” said Mary Ellen Carroll, Executive Director, San Francisco Department of Emergency Management. “I am forever grateful for partners in community who continue to team up with us to save lives. Today, we are safer from this deadly disease because of the tremendous lift executed then by City workers, partners, and our resilient community.”

Meanwhile, in partnership with community-based organizations, SFPDH launched eight community vaccination hubs becoming cornerstones in the City’s efforts to ensure that highly impacted communities had equitable access to vaccines at a rate of 10,000 doses per day.

As the vaccine rollout continued and more groups became eligible, San Francisco’s efforts paid off as it emerged as a leader in the state and nation in high vaccination rates. In partnership with more than 30 community-based organizations and health system partners, the City supported numerous creative, community-led efforts to get shots in arms and further lower barriers to the vaccine. These efforts included pop-up vaccine events, door-to-door outreach, education, information, and listening sessions, and ongoing presence to make people feel heard and supported with information to support their vaccine decision.



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For example, the youth of color-led [Max the Vax](#) campaign educated people about the vaccine, while the “vaccine ambassadors” program with UCSF and the Unity Council (Oakland) brought in students from SFSU and City College to engage with communities facing disparities in vaccine uptake. Meanwhile, the City’s “Vax to You” mobile initiative brought vaccines to the doorsteps of small groups of vulnerable populations, while giveaway incentives were donated by the California Academy of Sciences, the San Francisco Giants, San Francisco Zoo, among numerous other efforts. This fall with schools opening for in-person learning, SFPDHP partnered with the San Francisco Unified School District to open four school-based vaccination sites to reach the school community.

A year later, San Francisco is clearly in a different, and arguably much better place as a result of our high vaccination rates, as well as other common-sense measures like testing and masking. While we face new challenges, such as the arrival of new and potentially more virulent strains, and waning immunity from the primary doses, the City remains vigilant and driven by science and data. A new effort is underway across our health system and community sites to administer boosters at a rapid clip, with more than 250,000 doses reaching 43% of the vaccinated population so far, and 68% of our seniors 65 and over who are at high risk.

COVID-19 may be with us for the long term, but San Francisco showed how it’s possible to stay safe and healthy by working together and with the help of vaccines.

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