

NEW YORK STATE COVID-19 VACCINE EQUITY TASK FORCE

FIRESIDE CHAT TOOLKIT

What is a Fireside Chat? A Fireside Chat is an informal yet structured interview that brings information, with a personal touch, to the audience. It provides the space to have honest conversations about the COVID-19 vaccines from trusted community voices.

To reach more community members to spread the word, we developed this toolkit to help you run your very own virtual Fireside Chat. About 75 to 85 percent of New Yorkers need to get vaccinated for all of New York to be protected. Many New Yorkers are hesitant to get vaccinated. Furthermore, there is a lot of misinformation about the vaccines. You can help educate and inform New Yorkers to make sure they have access to the best knowledge available. Your voice will be essential to get the facts to your community and beyond. One way you can do this is by running your own Fireside Chat to further our mission of building trust, educating communities, and helping New Yorkers make informed decisions about the COVID-19 vaccine.

Planning Phase

Draft an agenda.

TIP: Think through:

- What are the key messages you want to focus on?
- Who is the intended audience for this Fireside Chat, and how do they feel about the COVID-19 vaccine?
- Are there specific myths or misinformation about the vaccine within the intended audience that you want to address?
- How can we best meet the objective of sharing information on the COVID-19 vaccine?

TIP: Consider timing. A great structure to follow is: 5 minutes for welcome and housekeeping, 5 minutes for opening remarks, 45 minutes for discussion/Q&A and 5 minutes for closing statements.

Identify speakers.

TIP: Consider:

- Who is best poised to present on the areas you want to focus on?
- NYS COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Task Force members and Ambassadors are a great starting point to identify speakers!

TIP: For best success, highlight trusted voices and community leaders who understand the experiences and concerns of the intended audience.

Develop prepared questions that you can give your speakers in advance. Consider weaving in questions from the audience as well, but it is always helpful to have prepared questions ready to go. (See Appendix 1: Bank of Prepared Questions)

Prepare slides (but keep these to a minimum). Include housekeeping items (e.g. platform basics – muting/unmuting, interactivity), potential discussion questions to generate discussion.

TIP: Prepare five to ten discussion questions to jump start the conversation. This will help the moderator guide the discussion and set the tone for the audience. Prepared questions can be sent to speakers/panelists in advance to help them prepare.

Decide which platform you will use for your discussion (i.e. Zoom, YouTube, WebEx, FB live, IG Live, etc.).

TIP: Each platform selected has different features and there are various licenses for each. Make sure you ask what the maximum number of attendees are that can be included. Partnerships will be key for this!

TIP: [Zoom Help Center](#)

TIP: [WebEx Basics](#)

TIP: [Live Stream an Event on Facebook](#)

TIP: [How to Live Stream On YouTube](#)



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Let's #VaccinateNY!

- ✔ **Decide how you will manage registration. Pre-registration can help you know how many attendees to expect.**
 TIP: [How to Create an Event on Eventbrite](#)
 TIP: [Online Booking System & Reservation Software | Bookwhen](#)
 TIP: [Ticket Tailor](#)
- ✔ **Prepare for language access services and ASL if needed. The Fireside Chat should be conducted in the predominant language of the speakers and attendees.**
 TIP: [Certified American Sign Language \(ASL\) Interpreters](#)
 TIP: [Closed captioning and live transcription – Zoom](#)
 TIP: [Language interpretation in meetings and webinars – Zoom](#)
- ✔ **Building your team – Producing a successful virtual Fireside Chat event takes a team that is comprised of many key roles and functions. For example, if you are selecting Zoom as the virtual platform for hosting your Fireside Chat, the following key roles will be helpful to achieve success: a Platform Host, a Co-Host, a Chat-box Moderator, a Screen Sharer, a Panel/Discussion Moderator, and a Notetaker.**
 TIP: Identify your moderator early and introduce them to the speaker(s) to help make the event.
 TIP: Set up meetings in advance to practice flow and get comfortable with the event platform.
 TIP: Outline the responsibilities for each role.
 TIP: Consider the technical assistance needed. Ask yourself who will run the platform, share slides, monitor the chat, and more!
- ✔ **Create a “Save the Date” flyer or announcement that shares the key details of your Fireside Chat to promote the event**
 TIP: [Flyer Templates \(office.com\)](#)
 TIP: [Flyers- Events | Smilebox](#)

Implementation Phase

- ✔ **Promote the Event.**

 - Share the ‘Save the Date’ and spread the word.
 - Use social media to get the word out.
 - Engage community networks, such as faith communities, support groups, and other community-based organizations
 - Share with other COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Task Force members, Ambassadors, and other community partners.
 - Set up regular announcements to remind registrants about the upcoming event.
 - Ask your speakers, panelists, and moderators to promote the event on their personal channels.
- ✔ **Answer questions from registrants as you prepare for the event.**
- ✔ **Develop a Run of Show.**

 - Continue to meet/check-in with the team and speakers.
 - Outline your event flow from beginning to end with times, names of speakers, staff roles, notes for speakers/moderators, tech-specific requests (e.g., share slides, recording, ASL, closed captioning), and anything else that would be important for your event to run smoothly!
 - Consider interactivity during your event:
 - [Polling for meetings - Zoom](#)
 - [Non-verbal feedback and reactions - Zoom](#)
 - [Post meeting feedback survey – Zoom](#)

Reporting and Follow Up Phase

- ✓ **Continue the conversation on social media and in your communities!**
- ✓ **Share your event with COVID19VaccineEquity@health.ny.gov so we can amplify the event with the Task Force!**
- ✓ **Please complete this [Survey](#) to share the details of your event!**

TIP: Some information you will need to complete the survey:

- Name of your event
- Date of your event
- Number of attendees who registered & who attended the event
- Which platform you used for the event
- Your promotional activities
- Your audience (e.g., open to all, regional, organization specific)
- Interest in doing another community forum
- Key lessons learned or other topics the Task Force should know about

Appendix 1 – Bank of Prepared Questions

General Vaccine Questions

1. There were many concerns in the public regarding the speed the vaccines were developed and approved for emergency use. How can we trust that the appropriate steps were taken to ensure the vaccines are safe and effective?
2. Now that the vaccines are currently being rolled out, is it still important for people to continue wearing masks, practice social distancing, test for COVID-19, and wash hands? Why?
3. How do vaccines work? Can I get COVID-19 from the COVID-19 vaccine?
4. How effective are the vaccines?
5. There are many concerns regarding the side effects after taking the vaccine. Let's walk through these and address them together.
6. Is the vaccine safe?
7. How long will the vaccines be effective for? After the initial vaccination, will people have to get booster shots to protect them against COVID-19?
8. Currently there are two vaccines being administered throughout the United States for emergency use. What are the differences between the two? Is one more effective than the other?
9. There are more contagious variants of COVID-19 that have been identified in the US, from the UK and South Africa. How effective are the vaccines in protecting individuals from the variants?
10. Why is it important for more individuals to support and take the vaccine?
11. When we talk about the COVID-19 vaccine, there are two topics that go hand in glove – safety and efficacy. Let's walk through these and address them together.
 - Is the vaccine safe?
 - Is the vaccine safe for individuals with compromised immune systems?
12. There are so many different types or brands of vaccines (Moderna, Pfizer, J&J). What's the difference between them? Are some better than others? Will I get to choose which one I get?
13. What about some of the more serious side effects – we have heard of reports of Bell's Palsy or infertility issues. Can you address this concern?
14. Should individuals who tested positive for COVID-19 antibodies still consider taking a COVID-19 vaccine?
15. There are emerging and contradictory opinions from the CDC and the World Health Organization on the safety of the vaccines for pregnant people. What is the current thinking and what do we know so far?
16. What happens if I skip the second vaccine? Why is it important that we take both?
17. How do I sign-up for the vaccine?
18. I am planning to get the vaccine, but others in my community are skeptical. How can I help them?

Building Trust

19. How have communities created grassroots support from within to get through difficult times?
20. Why is it important for individuals to get a COVID-19 vaccine and what is the significance specifically for people of color?
21. When the vaccine becomes more available to the public, do you see any obstacles as it relates to undocumented immigrants accessing the vaccine, particularly due to the fear of legal action?
22. Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe for people who are living with HIV/AIDS?

Disproportionate Impact & Acknowledging History

23. The government has sanctioned experiments on communities of color in the past such as Tuskegee, the sterilization of Puerto Rican women, and the American Indian Termination Policy. Despite the CDC's support for the COVID-19 vaccines, due to historical trauma, many marginalized communities remain hesitant, concerned, and/or dismissive regarding the vaccines' effectiveness and rollout for emergency use. What are some steps the medical community is taking to address the legitimate concerns which marginalized communities continue to express?
24. People from different racial and ethnic backgrounds that belong to underrepresented groups are disproportionately at risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19. How does this impact the equitable distribution of the vaccines?
25. According to the CDC, underrepresented populations are disproportionately more at risk of contracting and dying from COVID-19, when compared to other groups. What specific messages or interventions do you think should target underrepresented populations to reduce the burden of COVID-19?
26. The LGBTQ community has experienced a recent health crisis (HIV/AIDS) that was not addressed with the same severity and swiftness as the COVID-19 crisis. How are leaders making certain LGBTQ community members are included in the vaccine rollout?

Questions for Clinicians

27. As medical providers, did you/do you have any concerns or hesitations about personally taking or supporting the vaccine? If so, how did you overcome them?
28. Have you had any success discussing vaccine safety/efficacy with your patients? What messages resonated with your patients?
29. Despite the CDC's support for the COVID-19 vaccines, due to historical trauma and medical mistrust, many marginalized communities remain hesitant, concerned, and/or dismissive regarding the vaccines' effectiveness and rollout for emergency use. What steps is the medical community taking to address the legitimate concerns which marginalized communities continue to express?

Questions for Faith Leaders

30. How has COVID-19 impacted your congregation, other congregations, and the communities you interact with?
 31. As a faith leader what do you see as your role in the New York State vaccine effort?
 32. Have you created a sermon or had a meeting with your congregation about the vaccine? If so, what are some initiatives at houses of worship that have been implemented to get information out about the vaccine, or about vaccinating congregations and the surrounding communities?
 33. What would you say is the most important message to share with your congregation? Why?
 34. How are faith leaders incorporating the science and vaccines' efficacy into their messaging/sermons that centers around the COVID-19 pandemic?
 35. Many marginalized communities remain hesitant, concerned, and/or dismissive regarding the vaccines' effectiveness and rollout for emergency use due to historical trauma and medical mistrust. What concerns have you heard from your members about the vaccine and how have you responded?
 36. What steps can the faith-based community take to address this mistrust and help educate their communities?
 37. Historically, in Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities, faith-based organizations have been a source for spiritual guidance, resources, and emotional support. As BIPOC communities continue to be disproportionately more at risk of contracting COVID-19 and dying from COVID-19, compared to White people, what kind of guidance (or resources) can faith-based organizations offer?
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