

FEMA-supported Community Vaccination Centers Receive Peace Corps Assistance in COVID-19 Response

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The partnership marks second time in Peace Corps' 60-year history that the agency has deployed volunteers in U.S., the first following Hurricane Katrina

WASHINGTON -- Today, FEMA and the Peace Corps announced they have struck a historic partnership to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. For the second time in the Peace Corps' history, volunteers will serve a domestic deployment, at FEMA's request – the first following Hurricane Katrina and now at federally supported Community Vaccination Centers (CVCs) across the country.

“The Peace Corps works hand-in-hand with communities on their most pressing challenges, and right now the U.S. faces some of the biggest challenges in our country's history,” said Peace Corps Acting Director Carol Spahn. “The volunteers who contribute to this effort will bring valuable cross-cultural experience, language skills and adaptability fostered during their time overseas as they contribute to an equitable vaccination campaign here at home.”

“Working closely with our federal partners, state and local leaders, community-based organizations and the private sector is critical in getting as many vaccines to the public as possible,” said Acting FEMA Administrator Bob Fenton. “Our partnership with the Peace Corps is an example of our commitment to reaching under-served and historically marginalized communities, to ensure equal access to vaccines. FEMA's employees are excited to work alongside the Peace Corps in this ongoing battle against COVID-19.”

The Peace Corps will soon begin recruiting for this special domestic deployment. Those eligible to serve include returned volunteers evacuated from their overseas posts in March 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic. Assignments will focus on urgent needs as identified by FEMA, and on communities that have been traditionally under-served. Volunteers will be assigned to language support,



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administrative, logistical, and other work that supports vaccination centers' operations. It is anticipated that Peace Corps volunteers will be deployed into the field by mid-May.

The Peace Corps is implementing the COVID-19 domestic deployment through Peace Corps Response, a Peace Corps program that sends individuals with specialized experience to short-term service assignments of up to 12 months. When the agency activated more than 270 volunteers to respond to Hurricane Katrina in 2005, Peace Corps Response, then called Crisis Corps, also managed the agency's deployment to aid FEMA's relief operation in the gulf coast region.

This week, federal [pilot](#) community vaccination centers are opening in Boston; Essex, New Jersey; Norfolk, Virginia and Yakima, Washington.

FEMA in partnership with CDC, is using the social vulnerability index to look at demographic data and provide the best advice to ensure that we reach underserved and historically marginalized communities so that anyone who wants a vaccine can get one.

FEMA is providing critical support to the COVID-19 efforts across the country via personnel, supplies and funding to help establish or expand more than 500 state led community vaccination centers and over 70 mobile vaccination centers.

The agency has now provided more than \$4.47 billion for expenses related to COVID-19 vaccination at 100% federal cost share. These [funds cover critical supplies, staffing, training and transportation needs](#) that support increased vaccination efforts.

One year ago, Peace Corps temporarily suspended its global operations and evacuated nearly 7,000 volunteers from 61 countries due to the coronavirus pandemic. The agency's short-term contribution to the domestic response to COVID-19 will not alter its commitment to overseas service once conditions permit. Preparations for returning to overseas posts continue in parallel to this special assignment.

About FEMA: FEMA was established in 1979 when President Jimmy Carter signed Executive Order 12127, effective April 1, 1979, before giving the agency the dual mission of emergency management and civil defense shortly thereafter.



FEMA's employees are committed to the mission of serving our country before, during and after disasters. Every day, our team of over 20,000 emergency managers work to make our nation safer, stronger and more prepared.

About Peace Corps Response: Peace Corps Response sends experienced professionals on short-term, targeted service assignments around the world for 12 months or less. The positions are highly specialized and technical and volunteers provide targeted assistance in areas such as agriculture, community economic development, disaster risk reduction and mitigation, education, environment, health, and youth in development. Since Peace Corps Response began in 1996, more than 3,000 Americans have served in over 80 countries around the world. For more information, go to www.peacecorps.gov/response and follow us on [Facebook](#).

About the Peace Corps: The Peace Corps sends Americans with a passion for service abroad on behalf of the United States to work with communities and create lasting change. Volunteers develop sustainable solutions to address challenges in education, health, community economic development, agriculture, environment and youth development. Through their Peace Corps experience, volunteers gain a unique cultural understanding and a life-long commitment to service that positions them to succeed in today's global economy. Since President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps in 1961, more than 240,000 Americans of all ages have served in 141 countries worldwide. For more information, visit peacecorps.gov and add us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

