

FEMA's Role at Philadelphia Vaccination Centers Comes to a Successful End on May 25th

Release Date: May 26, 2021

Philadelphia's two federally supported Community Vaccination Centers complete their mission on Tuesday, May 25th, 2021. Both the Center City Vaccination Center (CCVC) at the Pennsylvania Convention Center, and the Esperanza Community Vaccination Center (ECVC) in Hunting Park, will deliver their last vaccine doses Tuesday afternoon, having successfully delivered more than 350,000 vaccinations and accounting for nearly 25% of all vaccinations in Philadelphia.

The centers, operated by the City of Philadelphia and supported by FEMA, were established to provide large-scale vaccination capabilities to the City's highest risk and most vulnerable populations. Nationally, FEMA supported Community Vaccination Centers have administered nearly 5 million vaccine doses. Across FEMA Region 3's Mid-Atlantic states, federally supported community vaccination missions account for more than 1.1 million of those 5 million vaccines administered.

"Philadelphia's two federally supported vaccination centers carried out a vital mission, delivering vaccines quickly, efficiently and equitably, to hundreds of thousands of Philadelphians thanks to a whole-of government effort and effective interagency partnerships," said Janice Barlow, FEMA Region 3's acting administrator. "The vaccine is now widely available across Philadelphia and across the region. FEMA looks forward to the same stellar collaboration with the state and city as we face the hurricane season together."

The CCVC delivered more than 325,000 vaccinations during its 12-week operations and was widely described as a "well-oiled machine." On its busiest days, the CCVC vaccinated more than 7,000 of Philadelphia's highest risk and most vulnerable residents. The Convention Center site was selected as a centralized, large scale vaccination location in support of city-run, mobile and



FEMA

Page 1 of 3

neighborhood focused vaccination clinics, due to its accessibility and infrastructure. The site's initial mission was slated for eight weeks; however, the City requested a [four-week extension](#) based on the resounding success of vaccinating thousands of Philadelphians each day. At peak staffing, more than 400 staff managed the site, with nearly 90 vaccinators, and operations and logistics staff members from FEMA and the Philadelphia Office of Emergency Management working alongside clinical staff from the Philadelphia Department of Public Health. The majority of the staff were uniformed servicemembers and included more than 220 Marines and Sailors from the Camp Lejeune based Combat Logistics Battalion 22, [who deployed to the site in late February](#). [Supporting FEMA and the City of Philadelphia was a unique and special role for the Marine Battalion](#), as the city is the historic birthplace of the Marine Corps. The [Pennsylvania National Guard](#) and US Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, and several voluntary organizations including [Team Rubicon](#), [Sewa](#) and the Red Cross also supported the vaccination center's operations.

The Esperanza site opened on April 9th, as a [second federally supported CVC in Hunting Park](#). The site was equipped to deliver more than 1000 vaccinations per day and was largely supported by clinical and clinical support staff from the [Pennsylvania National Guard's Task Force Stallion](#), which included more than 50 vaccinators. Esperanza had a profound impact vaccinating one of the City's most under-vaccinated areas in North Philadelphia, with more than half of its vaccinations delivered to non-English speakers.

"We could not be more thankful to our partners at FEMA, DOD, and the PA National Guard," said Acting Philadelphia Health Commissioner Dr. Cheryl Bettigole. "Philadelphia was hit especially hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, and when we needed to professionally and safely deliver tens of thousands of doses of COVID-19 vaccine, these partners stepped up and helped save lives. We are grateful for their service every day, but now especially after getting the opportunity to see them in action."

Both the CCVC and ECVC provided a robust compliment of language interpreters, access and functional needs capabilities (including wheelchairs and private vaccination stations), as well as disability integration and civil rights advisory staff. To ensure equitable distribution of vaccines to Philadelphia's most vulnerable communities, FEMA supported the City of Philadelphia with extensive outreach efforts, FEMA supported outreach included street teams canvassing local



commercial corridors and community centers, speaking engagements and trusted messenger tours with community and faith-based organizations, partnering with [disability advocacy organizations](#) and health care providers, and partnering with South Eastern Pennsylvania Transit Authority (SEPTA) to [give transit passes](#) to mitigate transportation barriers to vaccine accessibility.

The City of Philadelphia will continue to run a vaccination clinic at the Convention Center after May 25th, following the drawdown of FEMA-led federal support. For the past two weeks, vaccine recipients of Pfizer Dose 1 at both the CCVC and ECVC have been scheduling appointments at the City-run Convention Center vaccine clinic, as well as several other city-run clinics.

For more information on the City of Philadelphia's ongoing vaccination mission, visit phila.gov/health.



FEMA