



Mobilizing Transit and Public Health Partnerships for COVID-19 Vaccinations

NCDOT – North Carolina

The North Carolina Department of Transportation is tasked with overseeing the transportation network in North Carolina's 100 counties.

Supporting the Vaccination Effort

Coordination efforts between county health departments and transit agencies had been evolving throughout the pandemic. As in many communities throughout the country, local health departments in North Carolina have taken a central role in protecting their communities from COVID-19. Utilizing local existing relationships between transit providers and public health departments, or taking this opportunity to build new ones, allowed communities to come up with solutions that worked for each of their unique circumstances. The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) identified a source of funding for transportation services and began a partnership with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), allowing the local agencies to ensure no North Carolinian was left without a way to get to their vaccination.

NCHHS identified funding in the CARES Act to offer free transportation to vaccine appointments and began the partnership with NCDOT to disperse the money to individual transit agencies. NCDOT sent the funding to each transit agency across the 100 counties in the state. Using an existing funding framework, NCDOT distributed \$2.5 million, half of which was allotted equally to all counties, and the other half based on the portion of the state's elderly population. This is not a reimbursement-based program, but NCDOT is still collecting claims which allow them to see how the funding is spent, and so far it has paid for over 44,000 miles of trips to vaccine sites across North Carolina.

The transit systems using the funding so far have provided their communities with critical access to the COVID-19 vaccine. Communities were able to coordinate with other providers to devise the best plan for the funding. Systems such as the Inter-County Public Transportation Authority have been able to offer vaccine clinics aboard their vehicles. JCATS, in Johnson County, has been able to take nurses to the homes of those in need of vaccines and has helped transport medical staff to mass vaccination sites. These types of trips are taking place across the state thanks to this finding and partnership at the state level, and communities are enjoying increased access to the life-saving vaccine.

You can learn more about the North Carolina DOT and the work they are doing across the state on their [website](#).