



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 30, 2021

**Ventura County launches COVID-19 Vaccine public outreach campaign in partnership with  
Ventura County Complete Reach Committee to build community immunity**  
*Grants available for Community Based Organizations to participate in effort*

Ventura, CA – The County of Ventura has partnered with the Ventura County Community Foundation and Complete Reach Committee to launch a public outreach campaign to build community immunity. “The pandemic has shown the strength of our partnerships here in Ventura County. Those partnerships have been critical in moving us forward. Now, more than ever, working together we can build community immunity through outreach and education,” said County Executive Officer Mike Powers.

Grant funding is now available to Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to support outreach activities. Organizations are invited to submit a grant application at <https://vaccinatevc.org/>. Applications are due by Friday, May 7, 2021. The Ventura County Community Foundation (VCCF) in partnership with the County of Ventura, CBOs, businesses, local cities and individual grantees will expand vaccine education, awareness and outreach activities.

“We want to make all community members aware of the safety, convenience and benefits of getting the vaccine as soon as possible,” said Public Health Director Rigoberto Vargas. “And for those who have already received their vaccines, we’re asking for your help spreading the word to your family, friends and neighbors to help build community immunity.”

During the 2020 Census campaign, Complete Count Committees remained the most unifying and motivating groups to lead the charge on fostering education and awareness. Within Ventura County, the committee was able to convene numerous community based organizations and bring together a robust and diverse representation of our county who recognized the importance of the Census and could effectively communicate the message to their clients, customers, and participants. Relying on trusted messengers and community connections was vital to this effort to reduce fears and hesitation. These trusted partnerships brought Ventura County to the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile for accurate self-response during the Census Count.

“It’s exciting to see the reactivation of the newly branded Complete Reach Committee, where we’ll be looking to build on the collaboration, the innovation, and the momentum that we saw during our work together on the 2020 Census,” said Stephanie Bertsch-Merbach, Director of External Affairs and Strategic Initiatives. “The VCCF really believes in this endeavor and is currently raising funds through a match campaign with the County of Ventura to maximize every donation to support our COVID-19 funds.”



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More than 60 percent of Ventura County community members are now fully vaccinated exceeding the Statewide percentage of 39.1. More than 407,500 residents have received the 1<sup>st</sup> dose and more than 268,200 residents have received both their 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> dose of the COVID-19 Vaccine. In the beginning of the vaccine launch appointments filled within minutes. It has now come to a time where people are hesitant to receive the vaccine. “The recent pause on Johnson & Johnson has also brought hesitancy. We have not seen serious adverse reactions to COVID-19 vaccines in our County. The J&J vaccine is a great option because it’s one and done. I made the decision to get the J&J vaccine. It’s an option for our community members when they are making their appointment,” said Director of Public Health Rigoberto Vargas.

Appointments remain open and available at County, State and Pharmacy partner sites. The County’s mobile teams continue to serve homebound community members, the agricultural community and also continue to offer vaccine pop up events throughout the week at neighborhoods, parks and community partner sites.

“The best way to dramatically reduce your risk of getting infected with COVID-19 or dying from infection is to get the vaccine; all three COVID-19 vaccines are an exceptionally powerful tool for preventing infection and serious illness. The more people are vaccinated, the less deaths we will suffer and the sooner we can open up our daily lives to what they were before the pandemic. We can’t rest on our laurels. Oregon is experiencing a surge right now in spite of the fact that it has vaccination levels close to ours. This is a race to get more of us vaccinated. Even if you had COVID-19 and recovered, you need to still get vaccinated to have complete and longer-lasting protection,” said Public Health Officer Doctor Robert Levin.

Herd immunity, or community immunity, happens when a sufficient proportion of a population is immune to an infectious disease through vaccination to make its spread from person to person unlikely, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Community members are encouraged to make their vaccine appointment at [MyTurn.Ca.Gov](https://myturn.ca.gov) or by calling 1-833-422-4255.

Stay informed at [www.venturacountyrecovers.org](https://www.venturacountyrecovers.org).