

January 25, 2021

Governor Ron DeSantis
400 S Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399

RE: Nonprofit applications for vaccines sites

On behalf of the Hispanic Federation and our member agencies, we urge you to act swiftly in government efforts to coordinate COVID-19 vaccine distribution with nonprofits, nonprofit clinics, and farmworker clinics in the state of Florida.

Since the onset of this pandemic, we have witnessed the devastating impacts COVID-19 has had on our communities. With about [one in 14 people in Florida](#) having been infected with the virus, and an increasing death toll, Florida's coronavirus rates are [twice as high among Latinos](#) than among Caucasians. Latinos face significant barriers to accessing health care, including their proximity to health care services, previous negative experiences with health care (including discrimination, income, and insurance), and immigration status. Inequalities in accessing healthcare has existed for decades before this current pandemic and are one of many factors why COVID-19 has had an enormous disproportionate impact on communities of color.

We have seen our communities ravaged by this health crisis and must ensure that equitable distribution of this vaccine is of paramount importance. It is imperative that three initiatives take place immediately to ensure an effective distribution plan:

- Implement Latino-focused culturally competent COVID-19 testing and outreach, created in partnership with community-based organizations and community leaders throughout the state.
- Ensure vaccine administering sites utilize linguistically competent staff/volunteers and are located in areas with high Hispanic populations.
- Prioritize inoculating community health and human services providers, as they are front line workers in addressing this pandemic and risk exposure on a daily basis providing critical services to the public.

Through community involvement, prioritizing dissemination of information through culturally and linguistically competent mediums, and ensuring accessibility to vaccination sites, we will be successful in inoculating Floridians against this horrible virus and stop the spread of COVID-19.



Hispanic Federation is here to serve and is happy to work with Governor Ron DeSantis' office and the Pandemic and Emergencies Committee to protect all Floridians.

Sincerely,

Yanidsi Velez
Florida and Southeast Director
Hispanic Federation

CC: Pandemics and Emergencies Committee

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