

Safely Conducting “Touchless” Outreach Events During COVID-19 to Bring Services to Refugee, Immigrant, and Migrant Populations

It is not always possible to carry out important activities virtually. There are times when healthcare providers, public health staff and volunteers need to interact with the public to carry out essential activities such as food distribution, vaccination events, COVID-19 testing, health screenings and health and safety training. On some occasions this might include large numbers of people. This checklist offers steps for consideration in reaching refugee, immigrant and migrant communities while keep participants as well as staff and volunteers safe.

Prior to the Event

Marketing

- Consider culture and language
 - Make sure announcements are in the language of the target population(s)
 - Ensure images and photos used in the promotional materials reflect the target population(s)
 - Ensure refugees, immigrants and migrants feel welcome and safe

- Promote safety
 - Ensure all participants know physical distancing and mask wearing will be part of the event



This resource was created in partnership with the Migrant Clinicians Network.

The National Resource Center for Refugees, Immigrants, and Migrants (NRC-RIM) is funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to support state and local health departments working with RIM communities. Learn more at nrcrim.umn.edu. Last update: 1/4/2020.

- Partner with local or traditional and social media outlets that focus on target population(s) to promote or describe event
 - o Examples include targeted Facebook pages, radio stations with broadcasts in language of targeted population(s)

Weather and Outdoor Prioritization

- Indoor gatherings should be avoided
- Hold event outdoors if possible
- Consider the weather and have a backup plan or date if weather is prohibitive
- Have a flexible plan in case weather conditions change

Location Selection

- Make it a priority to hold the event in geographic area where refugees, immigrants and migrant will feel safe and welcome
 - o Church, school or park
- Avoid locations only accessible to those with access to transportation
- Avoid using law enforcement that involves persons in uniform or vehicles with flashing lights as this may deter individuals. Some communities may have had traumatic experiences with law enforcement; when services are needed (e.g. traffic control)

Layout of the Event

- Consider the layout of the area where event will be held



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- Conduct a risk assessment for each task to ensure physical distancing and other safety protocols
- Use tables to create obvious barriers to foster physical distancing
- Mark areas ahead of time to ensure physical distancing
 - Chalk Paper
 - Paper
 - Hula Hoops
 - Cones

Planning for Safety

- Plan to provide mask for participants that do not have them
- Examine site and layout to plan for physical distancing
- Ensure hand sanitizer or a place to wash hands will be available
- Incorporate staggered timing (should that be needed)
- Train volunteers and staff in safety practices as needed
- Ensure that all the volunteers and staff are aware and practice of safety guidelines

Event Volunteers and Staff

- Include community health workers and community leaders who speak the language of the target population, whenever possible
- Train, and when possible, hire people from the community to work at the event.



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- Emphasize the importance of staff and volunteers protecting themselves as well as modeling safe practices

During the Event

Event Volunteers and Staff

- Use interpreters
- Create a warm and welcoming event by having volunteers and staff, as needed, greet participants from a distance to offer an explanation of how the event works
- Consider using vests, lanyards or some kind of marker so staff and volunteers are clearly identified

Safety Considerations

- Ensure all volunteers and staff:
 - Have and use appropriately proper personal protective equipment or PPE
 - Wear a mask for those that do not need PPE
 - Maintain recommended physical distancing among staff and volunteers and between volunteers and participants
 - Clean frequently touched surfaces.
 - Wash hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer regularly
- Make sure any break period or food consumption by staff and volunteers is done safely
 - Consider staggering breaks



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- Ensure physical distancing if mask doffing is necessary
- Avoid any crowding of break areas
- Make sure all staff and volunteers model and abide by safety guidelines
- Ensure all participants attending wear masks and provide masks if needed

Information Provided

- Use signage to help explain activities in the language and literacy level of target populations
- It is imperative to provide clear instructions on what to do with the information obtained at the event and on any follow-up or referral that is needed by the individual
- For testing events:
 - Make sure participants understand how to access results and offer further information or assistance to ensure participants are able to access and understand results
 - Ask questions and use open-ended questions to ensure those being tested understand the instructions for accessing results
 - Consider using the 'teach back method' where you ask the person to explain in their own words what you just told them
 - Help prepare participants for the possibility of a positive test:
 - Explain and encourage participation in contact tracing
 - Discuss importance of isolation and provide resources to assist in planning for isolation



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- Capitalize on the event and use it for education or to promote health practices beyond the main purpose of the event
 - Education and promotion can be done while people are waiting through discussion, distribution of written information, use of posters or through videos.
 - Suggested topics for consideration
 - Proper mask use
 - Physical distancing
 - Handwashing
 - Testing locations
 - Importance of vaccines, continuity of healthcare, screenings

Useful Links

- [Guidance to Protect Volunteers From COVID-19 During Natural Disaster Response and Recovery](#)
- [Training Best Practices in the Time of Covid-19 Webinar Series: In-Person Training Under COVID-19](#)



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