

TAMACC urges Latinos to get the shot

Launches campaign for Hispanic businesses to boost COVID-19 vaccine

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The numbers are staggering. New coronavirus cases are surging in most U.S. states as vaccination rates remain below 50% and multiple new strains, like the Delta version, develop and spread.

Hispanics, who have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 virus, stand to get hit harder than some communities with the new and dramatic increase in positive cases and deaths. Three of the five states that account for half of the new incline in cases are California, Texas and Florida – three states with high Latino populations.

In Texas, 99.5% of COVID related deaths are among unvaccinated people, according to the Texas Department of State Health Services.

Vaccination is the only real option right now to get back to normal and the Texas Association of Mexican American Chambers of Commerce (TAMACC) wants more Latinos to be vaccinated and is beginning efforts to educate and persuade Hispanics to get the shot. Members of Hispanic chambers across are already engaged at local levels to increase vaccinations in the Latino community.

“Besides being the right thing to do, it’s just good business sense,” said TAMACC Executive Vice Chair J.R. Gonzales, host of the Latino Business Report podcast. “We can’t afford another shut down after the economic blow that we were already dealt.

“Vaccination is good for business,” Gonzales said.

As companies across the country announce measures to require vaccinations among employees, TAMACC is going to encourage all Hispanic businesses in Texas to do the same, particularly with new hires, Gonzales said. The leading Hispanic business organization in Texas since 1975 will soon be offering webinars and other online tools to help get the workforce fully vaccinated. Through its foundation, TAMACC is one of 12 Texas organizations that got a total of more than \$400,000 in grants from Your Shot Texas to battle hesitancy and increase access to COVID-19 vaccines.

Gonzales said education is the key, and that is why TAMACC is launching a campaign to increase the Hispanic community’s confidence in the vaccine and encourage Latinos to get the shot.

“Our Latino community is lagging behind,” Gonzales said. “We are the essential workers. We kept America going through the pandemic. Yet we are the last ones getting in line for the vaccine.”

There are different reasons why Hispanics are under-vaccinated. Undocumented immigrants are afraid that it puts them at risk of being deported. Low-income heads of households think they can’t afford it. Others might be fooled by political rhetoric. But the COVID-19 vaccine is free to anyone living in the U.S., regardless of immigration or health insurance status – regardless of political party.

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