



PRESS RELEASE

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Vaccine Equity Now! Coalition Unveils Equity Report Card Giving Baker Administration Mediocre Grades on COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

Boston, MA – A coalition of racial justice, immigrant advocacy, and public health leaders unveiled a [detailed report card](#) which shows that the Baker administration left behind marginalized communities in its COVID-19 vaccination distribution.

The report card gives the Baker administration Bs, Cs, Ds and Fs in four key aspects of the COVID vaccine distribution efforts. It grades the administration on both its “intent” to consider equity in the vaccine distribution as well as the “outcome” of their approach to equity.

“While Massachusetts can point to strong overall rates of vaccinations, this data obscures the inequities for historically marginalized communities,” said **Elizabeth Sweet, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy (MIRA) Coalition**. “For example, the mass-vaccination sites that were set up in April and May 2021 favored those that could take time off of work and had access to a personal vehicle. Barriers like these proved burdensome for people of color, immigrant communities, and low-income populations. Moving forward, we hope the next Administration better accounts for equity in the public health space – and in all areas of governing.”

The following table breaks down the four “equity criteria” used by the Vaccine Equity Now! Coalition, as well as the specific grades the coalition issued for both “intent” and “outcome” on these equity criteria.

Equity Criteria	Intent Grade	Outcome Grade
Addressing Historical and Present-Day Context	C	D
Community Collaboration	B	C
Accountability	F	F
Implementation	B	D

[The full report card](#) - which is being released on the heels of the Joint Committee on COVID-19 and Emergency Preparedness and Management’s own report - defines each of the coalition’s “equity criteria,” as well as the reasoning behind all of their grades. While the report card discusses how the Baker administration voiced intent to ensure equity in the distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine, outcomes were persistently inequitable. For instance, the Baker administration took the laudable step of pledging to allocate 20% additional vaccine doses to the hardest-hit communities beginning in Phase 2. However, the administration did not follow through on this commitment during the period when vaccines were scarce, therefore negating the intended “equity impact”.

“We chose to use these specific criteria because they address separate – but equally important – elements of governing that facilitate equity,” **said Dr. Atyia Martin, Executive Director of Next Leadership Development.** “Addressing historical and present-day context, for example, involves confronting how the legacy of racism in public policies continues to impact communities. As an emergency management and resilience practitioner, I have been a part of planning for and response to disasters - including pandemics. We know that the people who bear the burden of our broken systems in daily life suffer the most during disasters. However, it does not have to be this way. I hope the next administration will have the humility to let emergency management and public health experts lead and ensure that these equity criteria and data drive decision making.”

“It’s important to issue this report card because the Administration’s own assessment of their equity efforts, as indicated by reporting on their COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Plan, does not match the reality of the inequities we see in the data and that have been experienced by communities,” **said Carlene Pavlos, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Public Health Association.** “With increased awareness through the unveiling of this report card, we hope that the next Administration will engage community leaders in developing an after action report that, in concert with the recently-released report from the legislature’s Joint Committee on COVID-19 and Emergency Preparedness and Management, can guide future COVID-19 and other public health efforts.”

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The Vaccine Equity Now! Coalition was formed in February 2021 out of shared concern that the Massachusetts vaccine distribution was inequitable, resulting in lower vaccination rates for Black and Latinx residents who were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. The coalition is comprised of racial justice, immigrant justice, and civil rights organizations.