

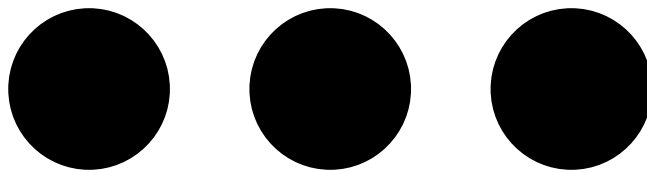


Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on April 7, 2022

Pa. Dept. of Health Turns to Churches to Push Covid Vaccines

Pennsylvania's Democratic Governor Tom Wolf is asking church leaders to bring Covid-19 vaccination events into churches, proving the Left only recognizes churches as legitimate institutions when they serve to advance their agenda.

According to a March 24 training session for chaplain assistants at UPMC Health Care System given by Aubrey Juris, partnership opportunity initiative coordinator for the Pennsylvania Department of Health's Office of Health Equity, the state's Department of Health aims to launch the "Faith-based Organization Coalition" on April 11. A video of the training obtained by *The Epoch Times* includes a slide revealing the coalition's mission to "harness the power of community trust in statewide faith-based organizations" to convince Pennsylvanians to get the Covid-19 vaccines.



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Though details on the coalition continue to be hammered out by the Office of Health Equity, the coalition is part of the commonwealth's [Local Innovations in Vaccine Equity in Pennsylvania" project \(LIVE PA\)](#) to eliminate so-called "vaccine hesitancy." Under this grant program, the commonwealth pays churches and nonprofit groups to persuade people to be vaccinated.

Amanda McNaughton, member services manager and Resilient PA Staff Liaison for United Way of Pennsylvania, told *The Epoch Times*, "LIVE PA is a collaboration between the Wolf Administration's Office of Advocacy and Reform and the departments of Health and Human Services, working closely with United Way of Pennsylvania to fund hyper-local, grassroots nonprofit and faith-based organizations to partner with certified vaccine providers to help the populations they serve overcome barriers to vaccination."

The grant program began in July 2021 and has since approved 104 applications, with 93 clinics already hosted. Applications will continue to be accepted through the end of 2023.

According to the United Way of Pennsylvania, participating groups will [earn](#) \$10 per shot achieved and a matching rate of \$10 per direct person-to-person outreach. Outreach efforts include direct social-media messages and text messages, phone calls, and door-to-door knocking. Grants range from \$400 to \$40,000 per vaccination event, and grant recipients are required to use both traditional and digital media to help fight vaccine hesitancy.

LIVE PA and the commonwealth's faith-based efforts were touted by Juris at the March 24 training event, at which she suggested that churches host vaccination events following church services and that



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nonprofit groups like Meals on Wheels bring vaccination nurses along on deliveries to offer the shot along with food.

Republican state Sen. Doug Mastriano, who is running for governor, was incensed upon learning of the LIVE PA program, having only become aware of it when a concerned constituent brought it to his attention, he told *The Epoch Times*.

“This is the same administration that treated churches as nonessential two years ago and used their powers to put fear in people’s hearts,” Mastriano said. “It’s ironic now they want to use churches to perpetuate their false narrative on vaccines or jabs. The lefties don’t like politics in church unless it’s their politics, then it’s OK to perpetuate their narrative and I’m sick of it. When they can use church for their political advantage, then that’s OK. I think it’s not appropriate.”

McNaughton said partnering with faith-based organizations has been “successful at reaching vaccine-hesitant populations” because of the “long histories” they have with the populations they serve and the trust that they’ve earned with those populations.

It seems churches are hesitant to get involved in such efforts, however. Juris said that of the \$630,000 available for faith-based organizations to participate in LIVE PA, just about \$16,000 has been spent.

At least one clergyman has said he would not be comfortable participating in LIVE PA.

“I would never do anything like that in my parish, I would never allow the state to come in, even if they were giving me money, to encourage people to come be vaccinated,” Rev. Christopher Seifferlein of Mount Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lititz, Pennsylvania, told *The Epoch Times*. “It would be taking sides in an issue that I feel that people should have the freedom to determine what they want to do. By having such an event, I am taking a stance on the issue.”

Meanwhile, the continued push for mass vaccinations wholly ignores the [overwhelming evidence](#) showing not only that the vaccines have failed to reduce rates of Covid transmission and death, but that there is, in fact, a slight increase in Covid cases among populations with higher vaccination rates. Meanwhile, [data](#) ignored by the CDC, FDA, governments, and mainstream media continue to underscore the health risks associated with the Covid vaccines.





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