

Bring on the Incentives

The State of California announced its [“Vax for the Win” incentive program](#) with \$116.5 million in prizes. There will be 10 winners of the top prize of \$1.5 million to be drawn on 6/15/2021. There will also be 30 winners of \$50 thousand each, half selected on June 4th and half on June 11th. Almost all residents of California, regardless of immigration status, who have received at least one dose of COVID vaccine and are identified in the State’s vaccine registry as of the time of the drawings are eligible for these cash prizes and are included automatically. Prize money will be paid after the winners have been fully vaccinated.

If you are a winner of these cash prizes, the California Department of Public Health will try to contact you by phone. They will make repeated attempts to contact you between 8am and 5pm. If they cannot reach you in 96 hours, they will move on to another winner.

There will also be 2 million \$50 prepaid cards or grocery cards distributed by email or text message to persons who have become fully vaccinated after a first dose on or after May 27th. If you believe you qualify but do not have email or a mobile phone, you can call 833-993-3873 to get a physical card. The same number can coordinate delivery if you do not have a permanent mailing address.

An mRNA Vaccine with Logistical and Financial Advantages

[CureVac](#) is a German COVID Vaccine developer with a mRNA vaccine that is expected to have final results of its Phase 3 efficacy trials by late June. Unlike Pfizer and Moderna, the CureVac vaccine is stable for at least 3 months in a refrigerator which will make it easier to use in low- and middle-income countries. Researchers at the Imperial College of London also estimate that producing this vaccine may be one-half to one-fourth of the production costs of Moderna and Pfizer respectively, a large savings when you consider the billions of doses needed to vaccinate the world.

70% Vaccination May Be Achievable

The message everywhere is vaccinate as many people as possible to drive down COVID infections, hospitalizations and deaths. A [Kaiser Family Foundation survey](#) in late May offers hope that despite a slower pace of vaccination, 62% of persons surveyed nationwide in May 2021 had received at least one dose of vaccine compared to 56% in April. Roughly 4% of unvaccinated respondents indicated that they wanted to start vaccination as soon as possible. Representing another 4% of survey participants, about one third of those previously categorized as “wait and see” reported that they had made vaccine appointments or planned to do so within the next three months. Added together, these groups of persons put a 70% vaccination rate in reach. The two groups with the greatest increase in vaccination between April and May were Latino adults, rising from 47% to 57%, and adults without college degrees, rising from 48% to 55%.