

LOCAL VOICES CAMPAIGN TOOLKIT

A Guide to Delivering COVID-19 Messaging through Local Voices in your Community

When it comes to educating your community about COVID-19 and working to drive changes in behavior, the messenger matters. Your audience is more likely to listen to and engage with messages that are delivered by individuals they identify with or trust.

This quick guide was developed by the **Washington State Department of Health** to help partners implement a *Local Voices* social media campaign to help prevent COVID-19 infections.

Social media is the most cost-effective channel for most organizations and allows you to easily serve the message to specific audience segments or demographics. However, if you have the resources to go beyond social media, this guide can help you extend the Local Voices approach for other channels such as radio, digital video, or even materials such as posters or signs to post in the community/on campus.

1. PLAN

Think about your objective – Determine which behavior or behaviors will be the focus of your campaign (for example, wearing masks or safer gatherings). Be as specific as possible. Some questions to help you get started:

- What is the greatest need in your community at this time?
- Can you tie your message to an upcoming holiday or event to make it even more relevant and timely for the audience?
- Think about specific behaviors you want to emphasize for your audience such as wearing a mask even when with friends or keeping gatherings small.

Getting started – Make a list of the behaviors and keep this list in mind before you start recruiting and interviewing. Make sure to check your list against any budget or time restraints you might have.

Know your audience – Most times, you won't be able to address everything and get to everyone, so it helps to prioritize. Start the campaign with messaging that addresses your greatest need. Key questions:

- Is there a specific audience you want to reach?
- Is there a barrier for this particular audience in doing your desired behavior, and do you know what might motivate them to change?

- If you don't know a lot about the audience you need to reach, can you do some key informant interviews with community members or access research to help you understand your audience's challenges and priorities?

Working through these questions can help you find the right messenger and develop a message that will resonate with the audience you most need to reach.

Tailor your message – This often happens organically once you've defined clear objectives and have a good understanding of your audience and potential barriers. But remember to be flexible when you feature real people (local voices) in your campaign. You want to make sure these community members feel heard—and valued.

In most cases, people are willing to share their stories in hopes it will make a difference. Your message should reflect that. Highlight their thoughts and experiences, and align those with the key messages you need to deliver to the community.

2. CREATE

Once you have successfully mapped out your campaign, it's time to produce.

Determine the outputs: For a social media campaign, determine the channels where you think your priority audience is spending their time.

- **Balance the channel choice** with considerations regarding what your team is able to produce and how best you can feature local voices with the design/production resources you have. Is it a short video message? A static social media post graphic with an individual's photo and quote? An animated .gif?
- **Consider making a template** to stretch your design resources. Determine the common threads that will run across all your local voice outputs, whether that be design elements (colors/fonts/image style/etc.) or a common sign-off message (i.e. *Thank you for protecting our community*).

Find your local voices – Remember the audience you defined previously? Identify and reach out to the people (a.k.a. influencers) who will represent that audience.

- **Higher education institutions:** work with campus groups, leaders, student organizations, and other sources that can help you find the right voices for your campaign. Highlight your mission to each person and be clear about your needs. They should know what to expect in advance.
- **Governmental and community partners:** reach out to communities or community-based organizations reflecting your priority audience. Consider other trusted sources as

well as including faith-based leaders, first responders or business leaders based on the audience you most need to reach.

- **If you struggle to identify leaders**, sometimes it helps to start by asking community members who they trust within the community, who do they turn to for information or guidance, ask who has high visibility or is recognizable by many? Listen for names that keep coming up, or for people who have a large influence or following.
- **Make sure each person is comfortable** with the messages you are wanting to convey and with the promotion tactics you will use to share their story. Be direct in asking each person whether they are “walking the talk” in regards to the message they will be communicating. For example, if they are promoting wearing masks, be sure they are consistently wearing masks when with people they don’t live with.
- **Offer a stipend, if possible**. It can help to offer each individual or organization a small stipend or incentive for participation. This also honors their time and contribution.
- **Signed release forms**. Be sure to ask each person who agrees to participate to sign a photo/video release form. Note: [a sample release form is included at the end of this document](#).

Conduct interviews – It may be helpful to set up an initial screening interview to ensure the person is a good fit. You can get a sense of the story they would like to share and how it aligns with your desired campaign messaging. After this initial talk, schedule a longer interview (30-60 minutes) to gather more details and if producing a video, you may even be able to record at this time.

Be intentional with who conducts the interviews. Do you have someone on your team who can best relate to this individual and their life experience?

Come to the interview prepared with a list of questions that relate to your message or a draft script based on the screening interview if you’re looking to record. Here are some [sample questions that the Washington State Department of Health used for a COVID-19 community awareness campaign with local counties](#).

Virtual recordings – It is likely at this time that an in-person interview will not be possible, but this can all be done virtually. Whatever video call platform you use, it’s helpful to work with someone who specializes in video production to help you capture your footage. Some tips for ensuring a high-quality recording:

- **Lighting**. Ask your interviewee to find a quiet place with good—ideally natural—lighting.
- **Background**. A solid color background is preferred so the focus is on the individual and not on what is behind them.
- **Dress**. Ask interviewees to avoid wearing anything with stripes or logos.
- **Audio**. To ensure quality audio, ask your interviewee to download an app to their phone for the audio recording, and guide them through the process of

setting it up correctly. You will want to record the interview in the video call platform, as well as via the downloaded app on the interviewee's phone. If you're developing a video or radio spot from the interview, you'll likely want to use the phone app recording because it will be higher quality. There are many free recording apps you can use. Here are two examples:

- HI-Q MP-3 REC (Android only):
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.hiqrecorder.full>
- Voice Recorder (Apple):
<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/voice-recorder-audio-editor/id685310398>
- **Filming.** Unless your concept requires something different, record everything horizontally with the video subject centered in the frame.
- **During the interview.** Try to keep the conversation on track; concise answers usually work best for video clips. Ask them to repeat key messages or lines that you know you want included in the final product.

Static approach – If you want to use static campaign materials that will feature a photo of the person with their story delivered through written copy, here are some considerations:

- Request the individual send you a photo of themselves that is consistent with your design template. Here is a [sample guidelines document](#).
 - Think about whether you want that photo to be just of them or should include people they live with. Should they take the photo while wearing a mask or no? Be consistent with your photo guidelines for all individuals in your campaign.
- If needed, use the contents of the interview to craft their story or a quote for your campaign.
 - Be sure to share your final wording and design with them for approval before using it in your campaign.
- If graphic design isn't accessible within your team, look for alternatives online.
 - There are several free or low-cost sites that offer pre-designed templates such as [Canva.com](https://www.canva.com).

Make it! – This is the part where things get put together. All the content you produce with the local voices should look and feel like they are part of the same campaign. Here's a quick list of things to look for:

- ✓ Community member/local voice prominently featured
- ✓ Clear message
- ✓ Relatability to priority audience
- ✓ Effective call to action
- ✓ Consistency in style

[Click here to see some examples of a Local Voices campaign](#) implemented in different counties across the state by the Washington State Department of Health.

3. IMPLEMENT

Go live! – After you have produced your campaign materials, it’s time to distribute. For the purpose of this guide, we’ve focused on a localized social media campaign. Implementing larger campaigns requires researching media outlets, negotiating media placements, and a lengthier process overall.

However, social media can be an effective and affordable channel for a Local Voices campaign. It allows you to target your campaign more precisely and provides the community and opportunity to engage with the posts.

For no cost, you can share your Local Voices social content organically to your organization’s/school’s social channels, which means you post directly to your page. You can also ask partners to share the content. To extend the reach, consider a paid social campaign to specific audience segments, or promoting an organic post.

Sometimes you may notice differences in performance between one ad or another. The reason can be something as simple as the caption that goes with a graphic or as complex as the relatability of the message. In any case, you should be able to tweak details and improve your campaign as you go.

SAMPLE Appearance Release Form - ENGLISH

Note: this sample form is provided as a starting place. Your organization may already have its own. If you use this form, remember to run it by your organization's approval authority.

SAMPLE language

In consideration for and as a condition to being permitted to participate in the production by or for _____, I hereby consent to the use of my image and written responses, and grant _____ and their client the right, on an irrevocable, perpetual, royalty-free basis, to the use my name, image, photograph, and likeness in any and all media for the sole purposes of use in the communication campaign to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including without limitation for advertising, publicity, commercial or other business purposes consistent with said communication campaign.

Without limitation of the foregoing, I understand that _____ and their client use, but is not obligated to use, my name, voice, image, photograph or likeness in any and all media now known or hereinafter invented, including but not limited to:

- promotional videos
- display/digital/online
- public relations and press materials
- advertisements, documentation and print collateral
- product and sales demonstrations by _____, its client, or its customers
- training materials
- broadcast media - television and radio
- demo reels

I confirm that, to the best of my knowledge, any statements made by me will be true and will not violate or infringe on any third party's rights.

I hereby forever release _____ and any of its associated or affiliated companies or appointed consultants (including, without limitation, its producer/production company and its public relations/marketing agency), and, for each, their directors, officers, agents, employees and customers, from any and all claims of every kind on account of or associated with the recording and/or use described in this agreement.

I have read this agreement and fully understand its terms. I have signed it freely and voluntarily and intend my signature to be a complete and unconditional release of all claims and liabilities to the greatest extent allowed by law. I understand that _____ is incurring expenses in reliance on my consent and that I cannot revoke my consent.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____ Email: _____

EJEMPLO Formulario de cesión de derechos de talento – SPANISH

Nota: Este ejemplo de formulario se proporciona como referencia. Es posible que su organización ya tenga el suyo propio. Si usa este formulario, asegúrese de recibir la aprobación de la autoridad encargada en su organización.

Lenguaje de muestra

En consideración de y como condición para que se me permita participar en la producción de _____, por medio de la presente, doy mi consentimiento para el uso de mi imagen y respuestas escritas, y otorgo a _____ y a su cliente el derecho, en forma irrevocable, perpetua y libre de regalías, para el uso de mi nombre, imagen, fotografía y semejanza en todos y cada uno de los medios de comunicación con el único propósito de usarse en la campaña de comunicación para evitar la propagación del COVID-19. Esto incluye, publicidad, comerciales u otros medios con finalidades acordes con dicha campaña de comunicación.

Sin limitación de lo anterior, entiendo que _____ y su cliente usan, pero no están obligados a usar, mi nombre, voz, imagen, fotografía o semejanza en todos y cada uno de los medios existentes o creados en el futuro, incluidos, entre otros:

- videos promocionales
- medio digital/en línea
- materiales de prensa y relaciones públicas
- anuncios, documentación y materiales impresos
- materiales educativos
- medios de difusión: televisión y radio
- muestras de video para demostración

Confirmando que conscientemente, cualquier declaración hecha por mí será verdadera y no violará ni infringirá los derechos de ningún tercero.

Por la presente libero permanentemente a _____ y a cualquiera de sus empresas asociadas o afiliadas o consultores designados (incluidos, entre otros, sus productores / compañía productora y su agencia de relaciones públicas / marketing) y, en cada caso, a sus directores, funcionarios, agentes, empleados y clientes, de todos y cada uno de los reclamos de cualquier tipo a causa de o asociados con la grabación y/o uso descrito en este acuerdo.

He leído este acuerdo y entiendo completamente sus términos. Lo he firmado libre y voluntariamente y tengo la intención de que mi firma sea una liberación completa e incondicional de todos los reclamos y responsabilidades en la mayor medida permitida por la ley. Entiendo que _____ está incurriendo en gastos basados en mi consentimiento y que no puedo revocarlo.

Nombre: _____

Firma: _____

Fecha: _____ Correo Electrónico: _____