Use the Communication Plan Template to help you plan communication activities to support and sustain your program initiatives. Communication activities may include earned media news stories, paid media or advertising, digital/social media (e.g., social media posts, website content, blogs, mobile messaging), and partner media (e.g., working with partners to share messages on their listservs or communication channels). The template provides space for you to outline communication objectives and activities for your audiences, identify who will lead each activity, assign a budget, and select metrics to measure success. Review your communication plan every six months or more frequently to make any appropriate updates.

## How to Use the Communication Plan Template

Each area of the template is defined below and highlighted in example communication plans that are included at the end of the document. You can reference the example plans to help you complete your communication plan.

* **Program Objective—**Take from your work plan (e.g., insert the program objective from the work plan in this space).
* **Timeline**: Provide information for each 3-month time period (e.g., Months 1-3, 4-6, .7-9, 10-12+)
* **Audience—**Name the primary audience to reach for the identified program objective. Be specific about which segment of your audience should receive the messages (e.g., Parents of children ages 3-12 who shop for food in their household; Men ages 25-55 with elevated blood sugar readings).
* **Communication Objective—**Write the communication objective to help support your program objective. Communication objectives should be specific, measureable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound.

**Communication Activity—**Identify communication activities to support your communication objective and ultimately your program objective. Communication activities will differ by audiences (e.g., public audiences, partner audiences).

* **Assigned to—**Name the staff member or partner that will lead each communication activity (e.g., Communication Coordinator).
* **Budget—**Identify the financial and in-kind resources needed to complete each activity (e.g., show staff time, in-kind resources).
* **Metrics—**Include metrics that relate to communication evaluation efforts or show success.Metrics vary by communication activity. Examples include number of materials disseminated; website visits; social media views, likes, shares, comments, or retweets; number of TV, radio, print, or web ad placements; circulation or number of viewers/listeners; number of media impressions; number of bonus spots; and value of coverage or total added value. Note: To help with tracking, download a copy of the [Media Impressions Worksheet](https://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/state-local-programs/spreadsheets/Media_Impression_Generic_MultipleTab_081518.xlsm).

For more information, contact the DNPAO Strategic Communication Team at [DNPAOCommTA@cdc.gov](mailto:DNPAOCommTA@cdc.gov).

|  | **Program Objective: Increase the number of SNAP recipients in Riverside who have access to farmers markets accepting SNAP benefits from 0 to 29,000 by September 2024.** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **TIMELINE** | **MONTHS 1–3** | **MONTHS 4–6** | **MONTHS 7–9** | **MONTHS 10–12+** |
|  | **AUDIENCE 1: Community residents in Riverside (e.g., caregivers responsible for shopping)**  **Communication Objective: By September 2024, disseminate at least two messages each month to increase awareness, support for,**  **and purchasing food from farmers markets using fruit and vegetable vouchers and produce prescription programs.** | | | |
| **COMM ACTIVITY** | * Find & request photos from the [State & Community Health Media Center](https://nccd.cdc.gov/schmc) for future social media posts * Search for & request low-resolution materials from [State & Community Health Media Center](https://nccd.cdc.gov/schmc) * Test materials/messages with audience | * Order full-resolution materials from [State & Community Health Media Center](https://nccd.cdc.gov/schmc) or adapt for local use * Finalize ad buy to promote local farmers markets accepting SNAP & EBT * Send print materials to farmers market staff to promote SNAP & EBT benefits | * Send press release to local media outlets about start of farmers markets * Post weekly on social media sites about local farmers market dates, locations, & produce available * Begin ad buy, review weekly progress, & adjust as needed | * Develop success story about farmers market (e.g., people with access to fresh produce, SNAP benefits redeemed, money staying in local economy) * Pitch success story to local media outlets * Post weekly on social media sites about farmers market dates, successes, etc. |
| **ASSIGNED TO** | * Communication Coordinator | * Communication Coordinator & LiveWell Riverside partners | * Communication Coordinator, LiveWell Riverside partners, Chamber of Commerce | * Communication Coordinator, LiveWell Riverside partners, Chamber of Commerce |
| **BUDGET** | * 10% Communication Coordinator time | * 10% Communication Coordinator time & financial resources ($5,000) * In-kind: LiveWell Riverside partners | * 15% Communication Coordinator time * In-kind: Media outlet donates radio spot; partner channels | * 10% Communication Coordinator time * In-kind: LiveWell Riverside partners |
| **METRICS** | * Number of photos found; amount of time saved used [State & Community Health Media Center](https://nccd.cdc.gov/schmc) | * Number of print materials disseminated; ad & message testing data; ad buy estimated media impressions | * Number & value of earned media placements; social media post views, shares, retweets, comments; ad buy media impressions | * Number & value of earned media placements; social media post views, shares, retweets, comments |
|  | **AUDIENCE 2: LiveWell Riverside Partners (e.g., local chronic disease coalition)   Communication Objective: By September 2024, disseminate at least 1 monthly message to LiveWell Partners about awareness and support of accepting SNAP and other electronic benefits transfer at local farmers markets.** | | | |
| **COMM ACTIVITY** | * Ask partners about interest in receiving sample social media messages * Select email marketing program & template for monthly newsletter * Develop farmers market champions program & promotion options | * Develop & test talking points about farmers market launch * Send monthly newsletter with sample social media messages, program updates, successes, & farmers market champions | * Share talking points for farmers market launch with LiveWell Riverside partners * Send monthly newsletter with sample social media messages, program updates, successes, & farmers market champions | * Send monthly newsletter with sample social media messages, program updates, successes, & farmers market champions * Share success story on farmers markets’ business impact with Chamber of Commerce & business partners |
| **ASSIGNED TO** | * 10% Communication Coordinator time * LiveWell Riverside marketing & communication committee | * 10% Communication Coordinator time * LiveWell Riverside marketing & communication committee | * 10% Communication Coordinator * LiveWell Riverside partners | * 10% Communication Coordinator * LiveWell Riverside partners |
| **BUDGET** | * 10% Communication Coordinator * In-kind: marketing & communication committee | * 10% Communication Coordinator * In-kind: marketing & communication committee | * 10% Communication Coordinator * In-kind: marketing & communication committee | * 10% Communication Coordinator * In-kind: marketing & communication committee |
| **METRICS** | * Social media views, shares, retweets, & comments | * Social media views, shares, retweets, comments; number of newsletters distributed & open rate | * Social media post views, shares, retweets, comments; newsletters distributed & open rate | * Social media post views, shares, comments; newsletters distributed & open rates; success story shares |

|  | **Program Objective: [INSERT HERE]** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |
| **TIMELINE** | **MONTHS 1–3** | **MONTHS 4–6** | **MONTHS 7–9** | **MONTHS 10–12+** |
|  | **AUDIENCE 1: [insert here]  Communication Objective: [insert here]** | | | |
| **COMM ACTIVITY** | * Insert Activity 1 Description |  |  |  |
| **ASSIGNED TO** | * Insert name & organization |  |  |  |
| **BUDGET** | * Insert amount of funding available |  |  |  |
| **METRICS** | * Insert reach metrics |  |  |  |
| **COMM ACTIVITY** | * Insert Activity 2 Description |  |  |  |
| **ASSIGNED TO** | * Insert name & organization |  |  |  |
| **BUDGET** | * Insert amount of funding available |  |  |  |
| **METRICS** | * Insert reach metrics |  |  |  |
|  | **AUDIENCE 2: [insert here]   Communication Objective: [insert here]** | | | |
| **COMM ACTIVITY** | * Insert Activity 1 Description |  |  |  |
| **ASSIGNED TO** | * Insert name & organization |  |  |  |
| **BUDGET** | * Insert amount of funding available |  |  |  |
| **METRICS** | * Insert reach metrics |  |  |  |
| **COMM ACTIVITY** | * Insert Activity 2 Description |  |  |  |
| **ASSIGNED TO** | * Insert name & organization |  |  |  |
| **BUDGET** | * Insert amount of funding available |  |  |  |
| **METRICS** | * Insert reach metrics |  |  |  |