

US to distribute 25 million cloth masks against COVID-19

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President Joe Biden's administration is set to distribute 25 million cloth masks starting from next month as part of efforts to defeat the pandemic, White House Coronavirus Response Coordinator Jeff Zients

said Wednesday.

"In the month of March, we will begin to deliver millions of masks to [food banks](#) and community health centers around the country," he said.

"We will deliver more than 25 million masks across the country, these masks will be available in more than 1,300 community health centers, and 60,000 food pantries nationwide," he added.

According to a statement, the masks will be high-quality washable cloth masks that are distributed for free.

"We really believe that this policy makes a lot of sense in that it allows, you know, people who are not able to in some situations find or afford a mask to get a mask," said Zients.

Community health centers are outpatient clinics that serve under resourced areas.

According to the statement, two-thirds of the people served by these centers are living in poverty, 60 percent are racial minorities, and nearly 1.4 million are unhoused.

Recipients for the program, which costs \$86 million, will be eligible to pick up two masks per person in their household.

The decision to proceed with cloth masks comes after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new studies finding that higher-caliber [masks](#) offer better protection for both the wearer and people around them.

According to the latest CDC guidance, wearing a cloth mask on top of a surgical mask is a good combination as it improves both the fit and

filtration levels.

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