



# News Release

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## **Frederick County Earns Awards For Actions in Response to COVID-19**

*Incentive Program Announced to Encourage Employees to Get Vaccinated*

FREDERICK, Md. –Frederick County Executive Jan Gardner announced today that two County divisions have been honored for work they have done in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Frederick County Health Department earned an award for its outreach campaign, *A Way Forward Together*, and TransIT has been recognized for its overall efforts supporting the community.

“All across Frederick County Government, our employees have been creatively tackling the challenges presented by COVID,” Executive Gardner said. “We can all be proud of the work being done to make life better for the people who call Frederick County home.”

### **Awards**

The Frederick County Health Department’s outreach campaign to help people who are struggling during the pandemic, *A Way Forward Together*, earned a Silver Award of Distinction by the International Academy of Visual Arts. *A Way Forward Together* provides tips and tools to combat depression, substance misuse, trauma, and suicidal thoughts. These resources can be found at <http://AWayForwardTogether.org>.

Frederick County TransIT earned the Transportation Association of Maryland’s “COVID-19 Above and Beyond Award.” Throughout the pandemic, TransIT transported thousands of people to their jobs, to medical appointments, and to get food. Drivers also delivered Meals on Wheels and groceries to seniors, and they bring a “Vax Bus” mobile vaccination clinic into the communities. TransIT fixed route driver Ricardo Hernandez, who also drives the mobile vaccination bus, was named the State’s Driver of the Year by TAM.

### **Vaccine Incentive**

To ensure the safety of all County employees, and the people they serve, Executive Gardner announced a vaccine incentive program for employees. Full-time employees who demonstrate that they are fully vaccinated prior to Nov. 30, 2021, will be paid a one-time bonus of \$1,000. Eligible part-time employees will receive \$500. The program will be paid for by the County’s American Rescue Plan Act funding.

“Vaccines aren’t just about us, they are about our entire community,” Executive Gardner said. “Our goal is to ensure a safe workplace and to protect the public, as well as vulnerable employees who may be immunocompromised or have vulnerable people in their households.”

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