

Date: March 2, 2021

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Thomas B. Modica, City Manager 

Subject: **Acknowledgement of Re-prioritization of Persons Ages 16 to 64 Years with Disability and/or Chronic Conditions During the COVID-19 Vaccination Roll-out**

On February 11, 2021, the Citizen's Advisory Commission on Disabilities (CACoD) voted to draft and send a letter of recommendation asking the Mayor and City Council to consider urging the State to allow higher vaccine prioritization for people with certain qualifying disabilities. This was based on advocacy campaigns being conducted at the State level.

On February 12, 2021, the State of California announced that individuals ages 16 to 64 with a developmental or other severe high-risk disability, in which Covid-19 would likely be life-threatening or cause death or limit an individual's ability to receive ongoing care or vital services, would be eligible for vaccine starting March 15, 2021. The attached CACoD's final letter of recommendation was changed to reflect that announcement.

If you would like further information on this communication, please contact Heather Van Wijk, Citywide Accessibility Coordinator, at (562) 556-7721 or heather.vanwijk@longbeach.gov.

ATTACHMENT

cc: CHARLES PARKIN, CITY ATTORNEY
DOUGLAS P. HAUBERT, CITY PROSECUTOR
LAURA L. DOUD, CITY CUDITOR
LINDA F. TATUM, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER
KEVIN JACKSON, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
TERESA CHANDLER, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER
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MONIQUE DE LA GARZA, CITY CLERK

CITY OF LONG BEACH CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

Nubia Cedeño, Chair
Stephen Adams, Vice Chair
Kim Vuong, Secretary
Elyse Ares, Commissioner



Victor Garate, Commissioner
Jennifer Kumiyama, Commissioner
Gretchen Swanson, Commissioner

February 25, 2021

Honorable Mayor Robert Garcia
Honorable City Council
411 W Ocean Blvd
Long Beach, CA 90802

Dear Honorable Mayor Garcia and Honorable City Council:

Re: Acknowledgement of Re-prioritization of Persons between 16 – 64 years of age with Disability and/or Chronic Conditions During the COVID19 Vaccination Roll-out

Starting **March 15, 2021** people ages 16 and older who are “deemed to be at the very highest risk” for COVID-19 complications and death will be able to get vaccinated — including those who are immunocompromised, have cancer, chronic pulmonary disease, Type 2 diabetes or are pregnant, per the state department of health. This is to include those who have a **developmental or other severe high-risk disability**, one or more of the following applies:

- The individual is likely to develop severe life-threatening illness or death from COVID-19 infection
- Acquiring COVID-19 will limit the individual's ability to receive ongoing care or services vital to their well-being & survival
- Providing adequate and timely COVID care will be particularly challenging as a result of the individual's disability.

Placing Persons with Disabilities First is a whole new idea. One that challenges the predictable conditions a person with a disability lives with daily. Each person with a disability in Long Beach – regardless of age – experiences a tenuous arrangement of reduced routine health and support care, co-morbidities, and dependence on others. And thus, has been historically and tragically placed at the back of the line.

We applaud the hard-fought inclusion. But to embrace this re-prioritization we must work with the City's Vaccination Equity group and others to ensure that focused awareness and equitable access to this needed vaccine the following considerations are imperative:

- The city manager's office and the Health Department must be fully informed as to qualifying conditions
- And, as equally important, is the development of condition specific methods to deliver the vaccines to these communities. It is not simply handing out travel vouchers. The Persons with Disabilities First approach must include: Disparity-free COVID-19 vaccination awareness and registration; along with pragmatic approaches to home delivery; ADA access; need for caregivers to be co-vaccinated and the ability to specify vaccination considerations.
- Further, as vaccine testing evolves CACoD will continue to address the needs of persons with disabilities who are not currently eligible, such as those under 16 years of age (Pfizer) or 18 years of age (Moderna).

This statement and the re-prioritization did not come without tremendous advocacy. CACoD acknowledges the efforts of State Council on Disabilities and Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund and many others to re-frame the COVID19 vulnerability of persons with disabilities.

We are here to serve and advocate.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Nubia Flores Cedeño, Chair
Citizen's Advisory Commission on Disabilities

Cc: Tom Modica, City Manager
LA County Commission on Disability
California State Commission on Disability