

January 12, 2021

Ken Sharp, Chair
Infectious Disease Advisory Council
Iowa Department of Public Health
Des Moines, IA

Re: Infectious Disease Advisory Council Recommendations

Dear Chair Sharp:

First and foremost, thank you for the incredible work of the Infectious Disease Advisory Council (IDAC). The work of this group is critical to ensuring Iowa's most vulnerable are protected and have access to the COVID-19 vaccine. The intentional approach to the discussions and the deliberative work of this group have exceeded every expectation and more. In a situation where there is not a playbook to follow, the thoughtful dialog and recommendations reflect your deep commitment to equity and making the right decisions in the best interest of all Iowans. I cannot thank you enough.

In your letter dated January 11, 2021, you provided recommendations for prioritization of Phase 1B populations. Given the urgency, I have reviewed your recommendations and I am pleased to accept these recommendations in full with modification.

Modified Phase 1B priority populations

In addition to accepting the recommendations from IDAC, I am adding the following additional narrowly defined, eligible populations for Phase 1B:

- Inspectors responsible for health, life and safety, including those in hospital and long-term care settings, child, and food production safety
- Government officials, including staff, to ensure continuity of government, engaged in state business at the Iowa Capitol during the legislative session

I have added both of these categories back in, given the national news of expected additional supply and factors that jeopardize the ability of the Iowa Legislature's important work as well as those who support that work. Additionally, inspectors are responsible for ensuring the safety and well-being of some of our most vulnerable Iowans, and the nature of their work includes inherent risk of exposure. Additionally, I appreciate the equitable distribution based on workforce and age—the State will adjust allocation percentages as needed. I look forward to receiving additional prioritization recommendations for Phase 1C of vaccine distribution.

As of today we've learned from the federal government of significant increased availability of the vaccine based on each state's ability to distribute supply quickly and number of residents over age 65, or under age 65 with significant health conditions. Once we have reasonable confidence that supply meets the demands of this broader eligibility criteria, we will activate the broader distribution criteria. From the very beginning from this distribution effort, it has been our goal to reach all Iowans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Garcia". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "K" and "G".

Kelly Garcia, Interim Director
Iowa Department of Public Health