



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS**  
P.O. Box 41100 • Olympia, Washington 98504-1100

December 24, 2020

**TO:** All Prisons Staff

**FROM:**   
Stephen Sinclair, Secretary

  
Julie Martin, Deputy Secretary

  
Rob Herzog, Assistant Secretary, Prisons Division

**SUBJECT:** COVID-19 Vaccine Acceptance

On December 22, 2020, Health Services administration [sent a message](#) to all department staff regarding the development of a priority list to ensure those who are vaccinated first need the COVID-19 vaccine most. This [prioritization](#) applies to both staff and incarcerated individuals.

COVID-19 vaccines are critical to mitigating the spread of COVID-19 in facilities. Keeping staff and those in our custody safe and healthy has always been our agency's priority. It is our strong belief that acceptance of the COVID-19 vaccine, is an essential way to manage this priority.

While acceptance of a COVID-19 vaccine is not mandatory, we strongly encourage you to consider getting vaccinated once you are able to do so. We understand there is a lot of conflicting information about the safety of COVID-19 vaccines, and we encourage you to continue seeking information from [trusted sources](#) such as the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and the Washington State Department of Health for information related to COVID-19 immunizations.

We have confidence in the safety and efficacy of the vaccine and will choose to receive it when it is available for us to do so.

Please know that your health and safety continues to be our first priority and please remember to continue physically distancing, washing your hands, wearing a face mask, and using appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). These are the best methods, in addition to a vaccine, to ensure coworkers and those in our custody remain safe and healthy.

***"Working Together for SAFER Communities"***