



New York State Correctional Officers & Police Benevolent Association, Inc.

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January 11, 2021

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Mr. Anthony Annucci
Acting Commissioner
NYS DOCCS
1220 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12226-2050

Re: URGENT Need to Vaccinate Security Personnel

Commissioner Annucci:

As of today, the State of New York has entered "Phase 1b" of its phased distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines. We at the New York State Correctional Officers and Police Benevolent Association, Inc. ("NYSCOPBA"), write you to urgently request when and how the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision ("DOCCS") intends to vaccinate essential, frontline security employees as quickly as possible.

Since COVID-19 entered our communities and workplaces in the beginning of 2020, our members have faced tremendous hardships. NYSCOPBA members work in a 24/7 operation and have continued to come to work in the face of these risks every single day, often working mandatory overtime at an overwhelming and exhausting pace. Our members have been quarantined, they have contracted the virus, they have lost loved ones, and some have lost their lives because of this persistent and deadly virus.

As our members continue to faithfully discharge their duties every day, it is imperative that they are afforded the opportunity to receive this vaccine as expeditiously as possible. Failing to swiftly provide employees with available vaccines as quickly and efficiently as possible during this surge of COVID-19 will only ensure the continued spread of the virus in New York State prisons. Our members have gone without additional protections for long enough.

Now, we call upon the Department to provide us with a roadmap for swift inoculation of employees, particularly the frontline workers providing the care, custody, and control of approximately 35,000 inmates. NYSCOPBA stands at the ready to assist and support the Department in this vaccine rollout in any way possible.

Please contact me as soon as possible so that I can provide information to my members. The timing of the vaccine roll-out has a direct correlation to how members believe the Department cares for the well-being of staff and their families. Let's work together to get this done right now.

Sincerely,

Michael B. Powers
President

Cc: Daniel Martuscello, Executive Deputy Commissioner