

## APWU Advocates for Prioritization of Postal Workers in National COVID-19 Vaccination Plan

On January 20, following the inauguration of Joe Biden as the 46th President of the United States, the APWU immediately pushed the new administration to prioritize postal workers in its national COVID-19 vaccination policy. In a letter to the administration, President Dimondstein advocated for postal workers to be recognized as frontline workers in the national vaccine rollout.

With virtually no national plan in place, the COVID-19 vaccine rollout has proceeded very slowly and unevenly across the country, with states/territories implementing their own plans. Many essential workers, including postal workers, are still waiting for vaccines even as they report to work every day, and continue to interact with and service the people of the country during the pandemic.

Though the CDC recommended postal workers be considered in the “1-B” status along with other essential workers, in many states (including New York) we are not included in the initial vaccine rollouts.

In his letter, President Dimondstein asked the administration to develop a national plan in-line with the CDC’s recommendations.

“We are optimistic that your new administration will work to bring order to the COVID chaos including bringing a national plan to the vaccine roll-out. We strongly urge that as part of this plan the CDC recommendations in relation to postal workers is consistently and fully implemented throughout the country,” President Dimondstein wrote. “The well-being of postal workers and postal customers depend on it.”

In addition to the letter to the Biden administration, President Dimondstein also wrote to New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, and other governors, urging him to move postal workers higher up in the vaccine rollout order in line with the CDC’s recommendations.

The APWU is committed to working with the new administration on a comprehensive, national vaccination plan.

## COVID-19 Vaccine Information

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound effect on all members of the APWU. Our families, our work, and essentially all aspects of our lives have been impacted. COVID-19 is a serious, life-threatening disease. One out of every 1,000 people in the United States died from COVID-19 during 2020, infecting more than 20 million people in our country. This disease continues to pose a grave threat.

Vaccinating is the most effective way to build protection against this disease. When enough people receive the vaccine in the population, we will see the spread of the disease slow significantly. This will provide us all with the ability to resume activities with others in our communities.

There are currently two vaccines approved for use in the United States, the Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines, and both are over 90% effective. That means they will prevent over 90% of people from developing symptomatic COVID-19. If you receive the vaccine and are in the small percentage of people who still contract coronavirus, either one

of the vaccines will minimize the severity of your symptoms.

Rigorous oversight over the research, development, and clinical trials ensures that all vaccines are as safe as possible. The safety of these vaccines will continue to be monitored as they are administered throughout the country. Depending on the specific vaccine that you receive, a second shot 3-4 weeks after your first shot is needed to provide the most protection.

If you have questions or concerns about specific health issues that may affect your ability to receive a vaccine, talk to your doctor or a health care professional.

The APWU and the USPS are in agreement that the vaccine will not be a condition of employment and is therefore voluntary. We recognize that such decisions are personal choices and we encourage members to make them in consultation with their family medical professional.