



December 22, 2020

**Interim COVID-19 Memorandum: COVID-19 Vaccine Prioritization in Certain  
OPWDD Certified Residential Settings**

On December 11, 2020 the Governor and the NYS Department of Health (DOH) announced that the COVID-19 vaccine would be available to individuals and staff living and working residential facilities certified by the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) as part of the initial phase of the COVID-19 vaccination program in New York, beginning the week of December 21, 2020. Limited amounts of the COVID-19 vaccines will be initially available and it is likely that the number of doses received in this time will not cover all persons living or working in OPWDD certified settings.

On December 21, 2020, the New York State Department of Health (NYDOH) issued guidance related to the Moderna vaccination program for facilities certified by OPWDD, the Office for Mental Health, and the Office of Addiction Services and Support regarding the *Prioritization of Essential Healthcare and Direct Support Personnel as well as High Risk Populations for COVID-19 Vaccination*.

[https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/12/guidance\\_for\\_opwdd\\_omh\\_and\\_oasas\\_12202020.pdf](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/12/guidance_for_opwdd_omh_and_oasas_12202020.pdf)

OPWDD certified residential providers should immediately begin implementing the NYDOH December 21, 2020 guidance in order to create a prioritization of highest risk residential facilities, and most vulnerable individuals living and staff working in those residential facilities, for the administration of the vaccine during this initial phase of limited distribution.

For questions, please contact the New York State Department of Health, Bureau of Immunization at [COVID19vaccine@health.ny.gov](mailto:COVID19vaccine@health.ny.gov).

Providers are reminded to check the OPWDD COVID-19 Vaccine web page frequently for updates <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/covid-19-vaccine-information-providers>.

For OPWDD-specific technical assistance, please contact Susan Prendergast at [Susan.b.prendergast@opwdd.ny.gov](mailto:Susan.b.prendergast@opwdd.ny.gov).