



San Diego County Police Chiefs' & Sheriff's Association

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January 25th, 2021

San Diego County Supervisor's Office
1600 Pacific Hwy
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Board of San Diego County Supervisors:

In the County of San Diego there are approximately 4,285 local law enforcement officers who are routinely dispatched to a wide variety of emergency and critical public safety calls. Many of these calls are for emergency medical needs. For example, our estimates indicate that San Diego County law enforcement officers handled well over 10,000 medical aid calls in 2020.

We know vaccination planning must be flexible based on changing availability, growing demand, changing scientific and statistical knowledge, and changing guidance from health officials at the County, State and National levels. The essential nature of public safety, the medical nature of so many public safety calls, the high-risk populations that law enforcement officers serve on a daily basis, and the growing size of the general population eligible to receive vaccination causes us growing concern for the 5,000 or so countywide law enforcement officers that continue to respond to daily requests for emergency medical aid. Some of our local agencies have experienced outbreaks and they have threatened public safety in the sense of staffing shortages, a need for modified call responses, and response times could be impacted if an agency experiences an increase in officers out with COVID-19. I am worried that this small number of men and women must continue to do their job to support public safety and public health while waiting to receive a protective vaccine.

Emergency services require a team effort. The task of responding to the emergency health and safety needs of our community usually involves a combined effort by fire and EMS personnel, and that of law enforcement. I hope there is some way to prioritize the vaccination of *all* first responders, including law enforcement, as a part of the changing vaccination plans. One potential solution is to consider the vaccination of law enforcement first responders along with that of others already in Phase 1A (i.e. medical first responders and firefighters).

It is well known to our employees that our partners in Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties are currently vaccinating their law enforcement officers and we, as the leaders of our respective organizations, are receiving regular requests for information on when San Diego county will begin offering vaccines to ours. Any information that you can provide regarding availability, scheduling, and roll-out would be greatly appreciated.

In the end, I hope we can work together with our medical professionals to ensure our communities are provided the quickest and best access to emergency medical and public safety needs throughout the county.

Sincerely,

Roxana Kennedy
President, San Diego County Chiefs' and Sheriff's Association