

Priority for Veterinarians Obtaining COVID-19 Vaccine Discussed

The IVMA has been working with state organizations to determine where veterinarians will be prioritized for obtaining the COVID-19 vaccine.

According to a December 28 article in the Des Moines Register, the State of Iowa's Infectious Disease Advisory Council, which is helping determine the order in which Iowans will be offered the vaccinations, invited the public to share opinions by December 23. At least 85 responses were received by the panel of Iowa experts, explaining why their members or employees should be prioritized for vaccination against the coronavirus.

In discussions with the State Public Health Veterinarian and Deputy State Epidemiologist at the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), Dr. Ann Garvey, indicated the IDPH and the Infectious Disease Advisory Council are still working through the prioritizations and will release the results with the public on their website (<https://idph.iowa.gov/>) when they have completed their work.

The AVMA has been advocating on the national level to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for veterinarians and veterinary team members to be considered a priority group for vaccination. An interim guide issued by the CDC in September suggested that veterinary team members may have access to the COVID-19 vaccine in one of the early stages of distribution, although the guide does not specifically identify veterinarians.

Veterinary professionals may be able to get earlier access to a COVID-19 vaccine if their personal situation puts them at higher risk. People 65 or older and individuals with certain conditions reported by the CDC to be at increased risk of COVID-19 may receive priority. When seeking vaccination, consult with your healthcare provider regarding your potential risk for contracting COVID-19.

The IVMA will keep its members informed as we receive information about the distribution of the vaccine. Check upcoming issues of the *IVMA Update*, the email *Communique* and visit the IVMA website, www.iowavma.org for the latest updates. For more information from the AVMA visit: <https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/animal-health-and-welfare/covid-19>

DVM, Sherry Billett, et al. "CDC Announces Priorities for Distributing COVID-19 Vaccine." *American Veterinary Medical Association*, www.avma.org/blog/cdc-announces-priorities-distributing-covid-19-vaccine?utm_source=email-optin.

Leys, Tony. "Groups Seeking Priority for Shot." *Des Moines Register*, 28 Dec. 2020.