

PRESS RELEASE: Indian Health Service **Allocates Vaccines for Urban Indian** **Organizations**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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After being excluded in previous pandemics, this is a step in the right direction for urban Indians.

Washington, D.C. (December 16, 2020) - The Indian Health Service (IHS) began the allocation process for the COVID-19 vaccine to IHS facilities, Tribal-facilities and Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs). As part of the 1A distribution process, initial doses from IHS are for Indian Health Care Providers and residents of long-term health centers. Since the start of the pandemic, the National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) has [advocated](#) for the vaccine distribution to include all of Indian Country, including urban Indian populations.

“As the data continues to show, this pandemic is killing our people at devastating rates as Indian Country bears the brunt of this crisis,” said Francys Crevier (Algonquin), NCUIH CEO. **“With the approval of the vaccine, there is a glimmer of hope. As urban Indians were left out of the H1N1 vaccine discussions, we are encouraged to see that Urban Indian Organizations and their staff who are providing life-saving care to our communities were among the first wave to receive vaccines.”**

The Gerald Ignace Center in Wisconsin was one of the first UIOs to receive the vaccine for their health care workers. ([See the video here.](#))

Next Steps

- A full schedule of the organizations receiving the vaccine is not publicly available from the Administration.
- NCUIH will provide updates as more information becomes available.

Background

- [NCUIH Signs Three Joint Letters Urging Congressional Action Before the End of the Year](#) (December 9, 2020)
- [NCUIH, NIHB, NCAI - COVID-19 Letter to Congress](#) (December 4, 2020)
- [NCUIH, NIHB, and NCAI Send Joint Letter Urging Congress to Prioritize Indian Country in COVID-19 Vaccine Efforts](#) (August 26, 2020)

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About the National Council of Urban Indian Health The National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) is the national organization devoted to the support and development of quality, accessible, and culturally-competent health services for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) living in urban settings. NCUIH envisions a nation where comprehensive, culturally competent personal and public health services are available and accessible to AI/ANs living in urban communities throughout the United States. NCUIH is the only organization that represents all 41 Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs) federally funded by the Indian Health Service.