



PRESS RELEASE

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RI Council 94, AFSCME, AFL-CIO Responds to State's Covid-19 Vaccination Schedule

North Providence, RI- Today, RI Council 94, AFSCME, AFL-CIO issued the following statement addressing the State's distribution of COVID-19 vaccinations.

J. Michael Downey, President of RI Council 94, AFSCME, stated, "We are appreciative that the State has provided COVID-19 vaccinations to some of our members who work at Eleonor Slater Hospital, the Veteran's Home, Central Falls employees and first responders. However, too many of our hardworking state and municipal, college, university and private sector members have not been offered the vaccine. Unfortunately, the state has so far been unresponsive to the Union's numerous requests for estimates when our members, who are in daily close contact with the public, will receive the vaccine. These individuals, including custodians, dietary employees, DMV workers, housekeepers, CNAs at group homes, DPW and DOT workers, have been diligently working for the citizens of the State of Rhode Island since the pandemic began. They are in close contact with hundreds of people every day, placing themselves, their families and the people they serve at risk. As recent media reports noted, it's outrageous that some well-connected individuals have received the vaccine."

Alexis Santoro, Executive Director of RI Council 94 stated, "The hardworking members of RI Council 94 have continued to make sacrifices to help the State, towns and cities during this critical time. The State's failure to communicate the requested information to the Union and work to protect these workers is very disturbing."

President Downey concluded, "I urge the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and the Department of Health to respond to our numerous inquiries and protect these workers as soon as possible."

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Council 94 represents over 10,000 active and retired state, municipal, and private sector employees.