



ONEIDA COUNTY
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

ANTHONY J. PICENTE, JR.
County Executive
ce@ocgov.net

January 6, 2021

Hon. Andrew M. Cuomo
Governor
New York State
State Capitol Building
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo,

I was pleased to see your change of course in regards to expanding the Phase 1a recipients of the COVID-19 vaccine. This vaccine is our one offensive weapon to combat this virus and with its rollout should come hope to finally turn the tide. Unfortunately, as of now, it has only brought confusion, as decisions on who gets the vaccine and when, as well as who will distribute the vaccine, has slowed local communities from administering it.

We can fix these barriers together. First, Oneida County and all counties stand ready to work hand in glove with the State of New York and all its pertinent agencies, hospitals, pharmacies, local doctor offices, schools and others who are in a position to administer this vaccine. I respectfully request you consider strengthening these partnerships instead of threatening fines and other punitive measures against the very people who are trying to help end this virus.

Second, and most importantly, it is imperative that you widen the phases for recipients even further. It is an unconscionable result of the current rollout that vaccines are sitting dormant instead of being placed in vulnerable people's arms. I respectfully request you immediately move to your outlined phase 1b which would include, in addition to everyone in phase 1a, a wide variety of people including law enforcement and other first responders, teachers, 911 dispatchers and most importantly people over the age of 75. This would allow those who need the vaccine the most to be able to get it.

Lastly, it would behoove every community to have a better understanding from the New York State Department of Health on up-to-date information on vaccine distribution in our local community. This information would assist local governments, hospitals and others who stand ready to distribute this vaccine.

Specifically, we need to know how many doses the federal government or the developer has delivered to New York State, how many have been distributed in Oneida County and how many remain unused. This information is essential to informing the public but also making the proper decisions necessary to distribute this vaccine.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony J. Picente Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Anthony J. Picente Jr.
Oneida County Executive