Vaccine Advisory Committee clarifies priority groups for COVID-19 vaccine

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The Idaho COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Committee (CVAC) on Jan. 22 voted on four clarifications to Groups 1 and 2 of Idaho's COVID-19 vaccine rollout. The committee also voted on four other clarifications in those groups using an online voting process. The votes are recommendations that will be considered by Gov. Brad Little.

"These votes are aimed at ensuring Idaho's critical and exposed workers are vaccinated as soon as possible with the limited vaccine that is available," said Elke Shaw-Tulloch, CVAC's executive secretary and administrator of the Division of Public Health, after the meeting. "CVAC will continue to recommend clarifications to priority groups as needed."

CVAC's online vote added adult family members who provide in-home personal care for adults 65 and older or for other adults or children with high-risk conditions to Group 1.2, behavioral health workers to Group 1.4, mortuary and funeral services personnel to Group 2.1 and homeless shelter residents to Group 2.3 on Jan. 15.

On Friday, CVAC first voted to include clergy who enter healthcare facilities to provide religious support to patients (giving last rites, for example) in Group 1, which also includes healthcare personnel and residents and staff of long-term care facilities. Group 1 is able to get vaccinated right now.

Second, CVAC voted against including foster parents in Group 2.1. That group includes first responders and other types of frontline essential workers and is eligible for the vaccine right now.

Third, CVAC voted against including gas, electric, and water utility workers who respond to emergencies (broken water mains and downed power lines, for example) in Group 2.1.

Finally, CVAC voted against including non-United States Postal Service package delivery service workers (UPS, FedEx and Amazon Prime workers, for example) in Group 2.3.

Gov. Brad Little is expected to adopt, reject, or modify CVAC's recommendations next week.

CVAC will continue to make recommendations on priority groups at future meetings. The committee's next meetings are scheduled for Feb. 5 and Feb. 19.

The Idaho COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Committee was formed by the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare at the direction of Gov. Brad Little in October and its members represent stakeholders from across Idaho, including the tribes, priority populations, healthcare systems and providers, and immunization organizations.

Learn more about the committee and find meeting materials at https://coronavirus.idaho.gov/idaho-covid-19-vaccine-advisory-

committee/ .

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