COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Committee sends recommendations on Group 3, clarification to Group 2 to Gov. Little

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Author: DHW Communications

The Idaho COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Committee (CVAC) will send recommendations for prioritizing Group 3 plus one clarification on Group 2 to Gov. Brad Little after its regular meeting Friday. The recommendations are subject to approval, rejection, or modification by Gov. Little.

“CVAC made significant strides in charting a plan for vaccinating Group 3 today balancing efficiency and equity,” said Elke Shaw-Tulloch, CVAC’s executive secretary and administrator of the Division of Public Health, after the meeting. “There remains much work to do when it comes to determining the process for vaccinating Group 3, but the committee has agreed on a basic framework that will now be considered by Gov. Little.”

CVAC is recommending a process for vaccinating Group 3 that alternates between age groups only, and people in certain age groups with at least one medical condition that puts them at increased risk for severe COVID-19 illness as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The specifics of this alternating schedule for Group 3 will be determined in the future.

Considerations for votes for Group 3 included people who are 16 to 64 years of age with medical conditions that increase the risk for severe COVID-19 as well as essential workers that have not yet been eligible for vaccine. That includes workers in the following fields:

- Transportation and logistics
- Water and wastewater
- Food service
- Shelter and housing (e.g. construction)
- Finance (e.g. bank tellers)
- Information technology and communications
- Energy
- Legal
- Media
- Public safety (e.g. engineers)
- Public health workers

During the meeting, CVAC also voted on the following recommendations:

CVAC voted in favor of Group 3 including people with conditions that put them at "increased risk" and that "might put them at increased risk" for severe illness from COVID-19.

CVAC voted in favor of including adults with disabilities in the list of medical conditions for Group 3. That includes: people who have limited mobility or who cannot avoid coming into close contact with others who may be infected, such as direct support providers and family members; people who have trouble understanding information or practicing preventative measures, such as hand washing and social distancing; and people who may not be able to communicate symptoms of illness.

CVAC voted against prioritizing remaining essential workers separately. Those workers will instead be eligible based on age and medical condition as described above.

CVAC cast a split vote on four options for prioritizing people living in congregate settings. The option with the most votes is to not prioritize congregate living separately in Group 3.

Finally, CVAC voted against including FAA Airway Transportation Specialists (ATSS) in Group 2.1.

CVAC's next meeting is scheduled for March 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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Media contact:

Niki Forbing-Orr
Public Information Manager
208-334-0668
Niki.Forbing-Orr@dhw.idaho.gov

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