Supreme Court of Arkansas

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January 27, 2021

To: All Members of the Judicial Branch

Vaccination Priority for the Arkansas Judiciary

As an independent branch of government, it is the duty of the Supreme Court of Arkansas to define which judicial positions are essential, and where each position should place in the vaccine priority schedule. We took into consideration the responsibilities of each position, level of interaction with the public, relevant health criteria, and the still-limited availability of the vaccine.

I, along with the staff of the Administrative Office of the Courts, have been in communication with the Governor's Office, the Department of Health, and other executive branch agencies throughout this pandemic. The following priority categorization was approved by the Supreme Court and given to the Governor on January 5, 2021.

When the Governor opens vaccines to essential government employees, this list will be in effect. The following members of the Judicial Branch will be placed in the Phase 1B and 1C categories:

Phase 1B

- Circuit court judges with criminal dockets along with their trial court administrators, court reporters, and staff
- Circuit court judges with juvenile dockets along with their trial court administrators, court reporters, juvenile officers, and staff
- Any judge over the age of 65 with at least one chronic medical condition
- Any trial court administrator, court reporter, or district court clerk over the age of 65 with at least one chronic medical condition
- District court judges, district court clerks, and staff
- Clerk of the Supreme Court and staff
- Circuit and county clerks and their staffs
- Prosecuting attorneys, deputy prosecuting attorneys, public defenders, and their staff
- Attorneys with in-person appearances pending in the criminal or juvenile divisions of circuit court
- Administrative Office of the Courts employees having regular contact with the public or other branches of government
- Jury panel members

Phase 1C

- All other judges including justices of the Supreme Court, judges of the Court of Appeals, and circuit judges along with their trial court administrators, court reporters, and staff
- Employees of the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, Administrative Office of the Courts, and other Justice Building employees
- Attorneys licensed in Arkansas who are over the age of 65

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January 29, 2021

To: All Members of the Judicial Branch

Vaccination Priority for the Arkansas Judiciary – Clarification

It has come to my attention that some recipients of my letter of January 27 are operating under a misunderstanding regarding the timeline of eligibility under the vaccination priority plan.

Please note that from my earlier letter that the priority plan adopted by the Supreme Court is only in effect when the Governor authorizes vaccine availability for essential government workers. To date, the Governor has not done so.

Currently, the vaccine is available to individuals who are Phase 1A (health care workers, long-term care residents and staff, emergency medical services personnel, fire department personnel, and law enforcement) and a subgroup of Phase 1B (Arkansans aged 70 or older and education workers).

I encourage you to visit https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/programs-services/topics/covid-19-vaccination-plan to stay informed as to when the vaccine will be made available to essential government workers and the Arkansas Judiciary.