



February, 23, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Sites in Low-Income Communities – Letter of Support

Dear Governor Newsom:

On behalf of the Black Leadership Council (BLC) we are writing to express our appreciation and support for your joint effort with the Biden Administration, to prioritize vaccinations for Black, Indigenous and Latinx communities in the state of California.

BLC is a Bay Area-based group of Black executive leaders of major organizations recognized across varied sectors – public, civic, and private - that seeks to improve conditions for the Black/African American population in the SF Bay Area, and across California. We do this by leading strategic initiatives across sustained economic, legislative, and community engagement efforts that harness the best thinking, practices, and ideas for Black Prosperity in the region and the state.

Our Immediate Priorities include:

- Advancing positive change and healing through policy reforms and community-informed legislative strategies;
- Identifying and supporting local, regional, and statewide solutions to help eradicate barriers to economic prosperity; improve health disparities and propel the socio-cultural advancement of Black communities in California;
- Convening an array of experts across disciplines and sectors including health, academia, philanthropy, business, faith, and community-impact organizations, using research and best-practices to help elevate leadership that helps realize solutions for Black communities in our state.

As you are already well aware, COVID-19 has had a disproportionate impact on Black, Indigenous and Latinx people. According to the CDC, “Long-standing systemic health and social inequities have put many people from racial and ethnic minority groups at increased risk of getting sick and dying from COVID-19.” Therefore access to the COVID-19 vaccine is imperative for these communities and should not be delayed.

Due to painful structural and historical racism and oppression against Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) in this country, particularly within the health care system, there is a prevalent lack of trust around vaccination receptivity. Successful administration of the COVID-19 vaccine in communities of color, will depend on the development of this trust.

As trusted messengers and partners for many BIPOC communities and organizations across the Bay Area, BLC is willing to assist with disseminating information about accessing the vaccine, ensuring that communication and outreach efforts reach the vulnerable populations that we serve. We would like to work with your office to support this effort moving forward and act as a trusted thought partner in future considerations.

We look forward to how this pilot progresses and hope that you will consider expanding these vaccination sites to more disproportionately impacted communities across the state.

For more information about BLC, please contact Christopher Brown at Christopher.Brown@prcsf.org or 415.972.0887

In Partnership,

BLC Co-Chairs

Brett Andrews, CEO, *PRC*

Kelly Dearman, Executive Director, *SF in Home Supportive Services Public Authority*

Nicole Lindler, Community Leader

Tomiquia Moss, Founder & CEO, *All Home*