



SAFETY SERVICE PROTECTION

OHIO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES



Robert L. Wagoner, Executive Director
www.ems.ohio.gov

Ohio

**Department of
Public Safety**



Mike DeWine, Governor

Thomas J. Stickrath, Director

Jon Husted, Lt. Governor

Robert L. Wagoner, Executive Director

To: Ohio EMS providers, EMS agencies, and EMS medical directors
From: Carol A. Cunningham, M.D., FAAEM, FAEMS
State Medical Director
Date: January 12, 2021
RE: Be Part of the Solution: Vax Up

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic upon frontline healthcare workers, including EMS providers, has been significant and, at times, overwhelming. The record-setting numbers of illness, hospitalization, and death due to COVID-19 substantially increased the demand for patient assessment, triage, transport, and treatment by all sectors of our healthcare system. Nationwide, including in Ohio, the availability of EMS providers continues to be strained by absenteeism due to COVID-related exposure or illness and, sadly in far too many cases, death.

Whether you are responsible for 911 response, interfacility transport, or mobile integrated healthcare, employed by or volunteer for a public or private EMS agency, or transport your patients in an ambulance, an ambulance, or an aircraft, all Ohio EMS providers tasked to direct patient care are at a high-risk of exposure to the COVID-19 virus. As such, certified

Ohio EMS providers are prioritized in Phase 1A of the Ohio Department of Health's vaccination plan and should contact their local public health district for information on how to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. While we continue to prevent the spread of COVID-19 by engaging handwashing, social distancing, and wearing masks at all times while on duty, **vaccination is the safest and most effective method to prevent COVID-19 disease.**

I am happy to report that the Ohio Department of Public Safety, Division of EMS, in partnership with the Mentor Fire Department, has created a "Vax Up" edition of the "Be Part of the Solution" public service announcement (PSA) to follow the first edition, which was released on March 23, 2020. The Division of EMS is providing this PSA as a resource to encourage EMS providers to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, to highlight the importance of vaccination to all public safety personnel and to the community, and to encourage the populations in the upcoming phases of the vaccination plan to be immunized against COVID-19. Some systems may choose to use the PSA alone while other systems may elect to follow the PSA with information regarding the vaccine, contact information for the local public health district, or points of distribution within the community where the vaccine is available. We are providing this resource to the Ohio EMS community free of charge, and the "Be a Part of the Solution: Vax Up" video can be accessed at [Be a Part of the Solution - Vax Up! - YouTube](#).