



**NEW BEDFORD BRANCH
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT
OF COLORED PEOPLE**

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PRESS RELEASE

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New Bedford NAACP Urges Faster Action on Covid-19 Vaccination

- Calls 600 doses per week for area “woefully inadequate”;
- Urges better outreach in communities of color

NEW BEDFORD – In a statement released today, The New Bedford Branch of the NAACP is calling on elected officials and area residents to accelerate efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19 in our communities. New Bedford continues to report among the highest total number of infected individuals in the Commonwealth, at over 12,000 each. Yet, the number of vaccines arriving in our city is woefully inadequate: only 600 vaccines are provided each week, according to the city’s health department for a population of almost 100,000. The city is classified as in the red – highest risk – zone.

Additionally, people of color are being vaccinated at a slower pace than others. The result is that, while the percentage of coronavirus cases in the white community is a smaller number to the overall population, Blacks, Hispanics, and Asians suffered infection disproportionately, with rates much higher than their proportion of the population.

Acknowledging that people of color are scheduling vaccine shots at a much lower rate than the overall population due to suspicions about the safety of the inoculations, NB NAACP urges better outreach to those communities. Additionally, public vaccination sites are sometimes difficult for residents to reach, especially those of low income. Shots should be available wherever residents regularly receive healthcare, from providers they know. In addition to making vaccinations more accessible, involving trusted providers would help to significantly reduce the skepticism that helps lead to low vaccination rates.

Renee Ledbetter, Vice President of the New Bedford Branch said, “This is a matter of life and death. We have to be sure to do our part to stem this deadly disease. The end is in sight, but will remain out of reach if strong action isn’t taken by the Commonwealth and residents immediately.” She continued, “We call on our elected officials and the Governor to speed the number of vaccinations available, to make them more accessible to the public, and to make increased efforts in communities of color to educate the public and urge residents to vaccinate.”

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