

Offered by City Councilor Michelle Wu, Arroyo, Edwards, O'Malley, Flaherty, Mejia, Campbell, Bok, Breadon, Flynn, Essaibi-George and Janey



## CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

### AN ORDINANCE REQUIRING EQUITABLE COVID-19 VACCINE DISTRIBUTION IN THE CITY OF BOSTON

*WHEREAS:* Black and Latinx residents of Boston have suffered disproportionately from the coronavirus pandemic, with the age-adjusted death rate for Black and Latinx residents of the Commonwealth three times higher than that of white residents;

*WHEREAS:* A recent Boston Globe analysis found that fewer than 14 percent of Black residents and approximately 26 percent of Latinx residents of Suffolk County live in census tracts within 1 mile of a vaccination site, compared to nearly 46 percent of white residents; *and*

*WHEREAS:* In a city where 25 percent of residents are Black and 20 percent of residents are Latinx, the only public vaccination site currently operating in Suffolk County is at the South Boston Community Health Center, in a census tract where only 6 percent of residents are Black and 11% are Hispanic; *and*

*WHEREAS:* Infectious disease doctors and community health advocates have been sounding the alarm that residents of Roxbury, Dorchester, Mattapan, and East Boston and low-wage workers with non-traditional schedules face enormous barriers to receiving the COVID-19 vaccination; *and*

*WHEREAS:* Boston is a city rich in healthcare resources, with hospitals that have successfully begun the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine to employees and are planning expansion of vaccine efforts to their patients; *NOW*

*THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:*

That the City of Boston Code, Ordinances is hereby amended in Chapter 12 by adding the following section at the end thereof:

12-16 COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

The Health and Human Services Cabinet shall coordinate with the Boston Public Health Commission and Boston-area hospitals, healthcare providers, and pharmacies to ensure that at least one COVID-19 vaccination site operates in each residential zip code; that the opening of new vaccination sites be first prioritized in most impacted neighborhoods; that all public COVID-19 vaccination sites also offer PCR

diagnostic testing to all Boston residents, regardless of immigration status, at no cost; and that at least one COVID-19 vaccination site in each neighborhood operates during early morning, evening and weekend hours, accommodating workers with non-traditional schedules.

The Health and Human Services Cabinet, in coordination with the Boston Public Health Commission, shall create a single online interface for vaccination appointment scheduling that allows residents to view all available appointments at all vaccination sites across the City of Boston, including City- and state-run as well as privately operated vaccination sites.

The Health and Human Services Cabinet, in coordination with the Boston Public Health Commission, shall create an online volunteer portal and training program for residents who want to help at vaccination sites;

The Health and Human Services Cabinet, in coordination with the Boston Public Health Commission, shall issue publicly-available weekly reports on the number of citywide vaccination sites, including their locations, staffing, and hours; and on the demographics of Boston residents receiving vaccinations, including their zip code, race and ethnicity, and gender.

*BE IT FURTHER ORDERED:* That these provisions shall take effect immediately upon passage.

Filed on:            January 27, 2021