



New York State  
**PUBLIC EMPLOYEES  
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VIA EMAIL  
Anthony Annucci  
Acting Commissioner, DOCCS

Dear Acting Commissioner Annucci,

Happy New Year; I sincerely hope we will move forward in 2021 to better outcomes for PEF members and all who work in state correctional facilities.

I write because I learned today from an article in [The City](#) that the New York City Corrections Department has begun inoculating medical staff in the city's jails against the coronavirus, and will soon be offering the COVID-19 vaccine to corrections officers and inmates. To date, PEF has heard nothing about any similar plans for the state corrections workforce. This is an issue of great concern to me and to our members. As a parole officer myself, I know the risks and dangers our members in DOCCS have faced every day since the pandemic began, and are still dealing with.

On behalf of these members, I ask that you please share with us the plan and timeline for dispensing the COVID-19 vaccine to all DOCCS employees; and if there is no such plan or timeline, please explain to us why not.

There have been several inmate deaths just in the last week, two at [Coxsackie](#) and one at [Auburn](#). An imam at Sing Sing – a state employee represented by PEF – also passed away in December. As the Times-Union article notes, the death rate for New York's prison population is much higher than the national average.

Given all this, it is critical that DOCCS/DOH inform us of the plan and timeline for vaccinating staff and inmates in the state's correctional facilities, similar to what is being done in New York City.

People's lives are literally on the line. I ask that DOCCS and DOH address this situation with all possible speed.

Thank you and I look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

Wayne Spence  
President, NYS Public Employees Federation, AFL-CIO

WS/em  
cc: Daniel Martuscello