

Used Car Dealers Association of Ontario

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April 6, 2021 UCDA Web Site: www.ucda.org

The Hon. Christine Elliott
Minister of Health
College Park
5th Floor
777 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3

Dear Minister Elliott,

Re: Including Motor Vehicle Dealership Staff in Phase Two of COVID-19 Vaccination Distribution Plan

I am writing to you as Executive Director of the Used Car Dealers Association of Ontario ("UCDA") to request that employees of registered motor vehicle dealerships be included in Phase Two of Ontario's Vaccination Distribution Plan.

The UCDA is a not-for-profit association of motor vehicle dealers with almost 5,000 members operating in more than 500 communities across Ontario. Our members are engaged in all manner of wholesale and retail operations, sales and leasing, rental, repair and transport of motor vehicles. For many years, the UCDA has worked with the Ontario government, the Ontario Motor Vehicle Industry Council, and police services, as circumstances dictate, to address and resolve public policy concerns. Most importantly, we work with members to ensure a fair and informed used vehicle buying experience for consumers in Ontario.

At the outset, please allow me to confirm our support for your government's efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19 and protecting the people of this province. We commend you and your colleagues for placing the health and safety of Ontarians above all else during these difficult times. Having said that, we respectfully request your support for including our members' employees in the list of eligible workers entitled to obtain vaccines as dealers have been identified as essential workplaces since the early days of this public health emergency.

We understand that Phase Two focuses on age and risk to prevent further death, hospitalization and transmission. The underlying rationale is to save lives, protect those at risk of serious illness and stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus. With this in mind, it is appropriate to prioritize the vaccination of workers who are at the highest risk of exposure to COVID-19, such as frontline healthcare workers and others who work in acute care, congregate settings and in community care where the risk of exposure is high. We fully understand and support these initiatives as these workers are critical to the pandemic response. However, we ask that you consider expanding the list to include other workers who regularly come into contact with the public and are thereby exposed to potential infection.

As mentioned, motor vehicle dealerships have been deemed essential and been permitted to operate, with appropriate restrictions, under the COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open during provincial lockdowns and shutdowns. During the current provincial shutdown, dealerships are subject to the following restrictions:

Motor Vehicle Sales:

- 25% capacity limit
- Must post capacity limits
- A safety plan is required to be prepared and made available upon request
- Retailers must have passive screening notice for customers and active screening for staff
- Individuals must physically distance (2 metres) and wear a face covering
- Curbside pickup and delivery permitted, as are online sales
- Test Drive Restriction in effect
 - limited to no more than 10 minutes
 - a maximum of two people, including up to one sales representative permitted
 - windows must be opened at all times if two people who are not members of the same household are present in the vehicle

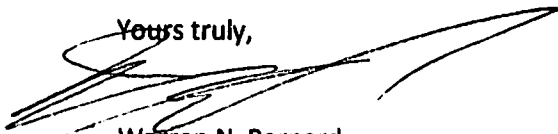
Dealership employees, and in particular service technicians and advisors, who deal directly with the public, are not currently included in Phase Two. Yet, like all retail and service workers, even in the restrictive circumstances in which they are in contact with the public, and allowing for the precautions of their respective safety plans, they are at an increased risk of contracting COVID-19. These employees interact daily with their families and therefore the risk of spreading the transmission of COVID-19 is a very real possibility.

The UCDA agrees with your government's recent decision to expand the number of workers who are eligible for COVID-19 vaccinations under Phase Two. These include restaurant and LCBO employees, among others. We believe that the rationale for expanding the number of workers eligible for vaccinations under the current Phase should apply equally to our members' employees.

We do not make our request lightly. Nor do we wish in any way to diminish the gravity of the dangers that COVID-19 has presented to all Ontarians or to undermine your government's efforts to stem the spread of the virus by prioritizing who should be vaccinated based on age and risk of exposure. Our members have real and credible concerns about their employees' health and the risk to which they are exposed when dealing with the public. For this reason we request that you consider including them in the rollout of the Phase Two Vaccination Plan.

We would be pleased to meet with you or one of your Ministry colleagues to further discuss our request.

Yours truly,



Warren N. Barnard

cc. The Hon. Doug Ford, Premier
Ms. Heather Watt, Chief of Staff to the Minister of Health
Ms. Helen Angus, Deputy Minister of Health
Ms. Emily Beduz, Director of Pandemic Response, Office of the Minister of Health
Dr. David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health