



CITY OF MILWAUKEE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## DHS Grant Program Seeks to Promote Equity in Vaccine Administration

**Joint statement from Alderman Cavalier Johnson, Alderman Khalif J. Rainey and  
Alderswoman Marina Dimitrijevic**

Yesterday the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) began accepting applications for a \$3.1 million grant program aimed at promoting equity in the COVID-19 vaccination program. Approximately 50 grants will be awarded to community-based organizations to compliment efforts to promote vaccine confidence and reduce other barriers that would prevent vaccination.

We want to thank DHS for recognizing the equity issues that exist, and initiating this program that will engage local partners who know their communities best.

Throughout the pandemic, communities of color have experienced higher rates of COVID-19 related infections, hospitalizations and death, and thus far have also received a disproportionately lower share of vaccines. This must change and engaging community-based organizations in the process can be an important part of the puzzle.

We are encouraging local, qualifying organizations to apply for this grant opportunity and support this vital health equity work. Applications are being accepted until 4 p.m. on March 19. Additional information on the grant can be accessed by visiting <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/contracts/covid-19-vaccination-community-outreach.htm/>.

It should also be acknowledged that inequities exist in vaccine distribution as well. The City of Milwaukee and Milwaukee County are the state's most populous, diverse, and densely populated city and county respectively, and we need our fair share and perhaps more given our health and social determinants. We will continue to call for more doses so that the virus can be properly mitigated in the areas of highest concentration, because until that happens, we will continue grappling with COVID-19.