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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Lowell First Responders to Begin Receiving COVID-19 Vaccinations**

LOWELL, MA – The City of Lowell has announced that COVID-19 vaccinations for Lowell first responders will begin on Monday, January 11. Members of the Lowell Police Department and Lowell Fire Department will be eligible to be vaccinated during a five-day clinic being held at the Lowell Senior Center through Friday, January 15. First responders are the third priority group within Phase 1 of the Commonwealth’s vaccine distribution timeline.

The COVID-19 vaccine manufactured by ModernaTX, Inc, which received emergency approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on December 18, 2020, will be used to vaccinate first responders during this period. The Moderna vaccine was found to be 94.1% effective in preventing COVID-19 in clinical trials. It requires two shots, administered 28 days apart, for efficacy.

The Lowell Health Department was issued a supply of vaccine from the Commonwealth to enable this effort after submitting a proposal for distribution to first responders that met the guidelines for the Massachusetts COVID-19 Vaccine Program (MCVP). Vaccinations will be administered by a rotating group of four nurses from the Health Department, UMass Lowell Health Services, the Medical Reserve Corps of Massachusetts (MRC) and additional volunteers from local healthcare agencies.

“The health and safety of our first responders has been a major concern for the City throughout the COVID-19 crisis,” **said City Manager Eileen Donoghue.** “We are grateful that the Baker-Polito Administration and the Vaccine Advisory Group have prioritized first responders in the vaccination process. The ability to vaccinate members of our Police and Fire Departments is a critical step in ensuring the readiness of both Departments to respond to emergencies and protect the community.”

“Police officers and first responders have been on the frontlines in responding to the pandemic from its outset, and have continually been asked to risk their own health and safety in order to discharge their duties,” **said Superintendent of Police Kelly Richardson.** “The opportunity for Lowell police officers to receive a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccination is greatly encouraging and will have a positive impact on our Department as we continue to confront the challenges associated with this ongoing crisis.”

“The Lowell Health Department has worked tirelessly over recent weeks to implement a plan to vaccinate Lowell first responders in a safe and efficient manner,” said **Director of Health and Human Services Joanne Belanger**.

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