

**ERIC JOHNSON**  
**Mayor of Dallas**



January 13, 2021

Dallas County Judge Clay Jenkins  
411 Elm Street  
Dallas, Texas 75202

*Sent via email: [clay.jenkins@dallascounty.org](mailto:clay.jenkins@dallascounty.org)*

Dear Judge Jenkins:

I wanted to reach out to you today to express my serious concerns about communication and decision-making by Dallas County.

On Wednesday, we were alerted about a change in the requirements for residents to receive a COVID-19 vaccine at the Fair Park mega-site. This alert did not come from Dallas County Health and Human Services, our partners in this endeavor and the City's contracted public health authority. Instead, we learned this information from a resident who told us they were able to simply walk up and get the vaccine without needing to register, which had been a stated requirement in the original guidance provided to residents earlier in the week.

I was certainly not aware of this change in my capacity as the Emergency Management Director for the City of Dallas. Neither was my Emergency Management Coordinator, Rocky Vaz. We inquired further and discovered that you had communicated this policy change to a select group of residents Tuesday. A participant in this conversation, someone who I trust a great deal, said that you had requested their agreement to not share this information widely.

Let me be clear: I want to distribute as many vaccines as possible and get them to residents expeditiously and efficiently. I want people to get the vaccine as soon as they are able and eligible. I want enough people to get the vaccine to create herd immunity. I want our underserved communities that are hit hardest by COVID-19 to receive access to the vaccine. And if allowing walk-ups for eligible residents is the most effective way to achieve those goals, then I will be supportive.

However, I find it incredibly disappointing, especially as vaccine supply remains limited, that Dallas County — without consultation with your partners at the City of Dallas, who have supplied personnel for the site — would tell the public-at-large that they need to register for appointments while simultaneously attempting a word-of-mouth approach that gives preferential treatment to people who happen to know the right people. In just one day, we heard of serious confusion among our mutual constituents and received numerous calls from rightfully baffled residents who had been on the waitlist to get vaccinated but were not informed they could come to the site as soon as possible.

To reiterate, it's unacceptable that we were not notified about such a major decision. If Dallas County Health and Human Services does not make a good faith effort to partner with the City of Dallas going forward, we will be forced to reevaluate our contract. Our taxpaying residents deserve and should expect clear communication, equitable access, and effective management as we navigate this pandemic.

If you would like to discuss this matter further, we can do so in our weekly phone call. Otherwise, please communicate with Mr. Vaz about the plans going forward.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Johnson', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Eric Johnson  
Emergency Management Director  
City of Dallas

Cc: Chairman Casey Thomas, Ad Hoc Committee on COVID-19 Recovery and Assistance  
Chairwoman Cara Mendelsohn, Government Performance and Financial Management Committee  
Chairwoman Jennifer Gates, Public Safety Committee  
Rocky Vaz, Emergency Management Coordinator, City of Dallas  
T.C. Broadnax, City Manager  
Dr. Philip Huang, Director of Dallas County Health and Human Services