



STATE OF WASHINGTON
— OFFICE OF GOVERNOR JAY INSLEE —

September 17, 2021

Mr. Jeffrey Zients
COVID-19 Response Coordinator
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. Zients:

I appreciate the aggressive comprehensive national strategy recently outlined by President Biden to ensure that we utilize every tool to combat COVID-19. This path out of the pandemic, which features COVID-19 vaccine requirements, increased COVID-19 testing supplies, greater availability of monoclonal antibody treatments, and additional resources for states, is key to our shared goals of saving lives in the months ahead and protecting our nation's economic recovery.

In Washington State, our hospitals are currently at or beyond capacity, and we need additional assistance at this time. Our hospitals were nearing capacity this summer – before the Delta variant hit our state. Much of this volume was due to delayed care during the early part of the pandemic.

Once the Delta variant hit Washington state, COVID-19 hospitalizations skyrocketed. From mid-July to late August, we saw hospitalizations double about every two weeks. The hospitals have surged to increase staffed beds and stretch staff and have canceled most non-urgent procedures, but are still over capacity across the state.

For these reasons, I have directed state agencies to request assistance from the federal government to provide Washington State with medical staff resources to help meet staffing needs in hospitals and in long-term care facilities. To date, the Washington State Department of Health has requested 1,200 clinical and non-clinical staff through the General Services Administration contracting process offered through FEMA.

I am further requesting the deployment of Department of Defense medical personnel to assist with the current hospital crisis. In announcing the COVID-19 Action Plan, the President indicated that more clinical teams would be available. That assistance will be of significant value in Washington state.

COVID-19 Response Coordinator Jeffrey Zients

September 17, 2021

Page 2

While there are hopeful signs that the current wave of infection is peaking, and some states are beginning to see declines, we have not yet seen that effect here. Washington State has historically lagged the country in previous COVID-19 waves, and the same pattern is playing out with the enormous impact we are seeing from the Delta variant.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this urgent request for assistance. Our state stands ready to work with the administration to effectively deploy these federal personnel. If you have any questions or need further information, please contact Molly Voris, Special Advisor for Pandemic Health Response (molly.voris@gov.wa.gov) and Morgan Wilson, Director of Federal and Inter-State Affairs (morgan.wilson@gov.wa.gov).

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jay Inslee".

Jay Inslee
Governor