



***Public Protection  
through fair and  
impartial application  
and enforcement of  
practice acts***



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## Idaho State Board of Medicine

# THE REPORT

Winter 2021

### Message From the Board:

## PROTOCOLS AND PROCLAMATION ISSUED FOR COVID-19

### Catherine Cunagin, MD, Board Member

A public health emergency proclamation was issued by Governor Little on March 13, 2020. This proclamation authorized the Idaho State Board of Medicine to issue temporary rules modifying licensing requirements in order to maximize access to healthcare for the citizens of Idaho and to provide support for physicians and other clinicians across the state.

Temporary licenses are available for those physicians, physician assistants and respiratory therapists who have retired or have been inactive in the past five years and held a license from Idaho and other states to practice medicine. These clinicians must have been in good standing at the time of retirement or inactivity.

The board has also encouraged the use of telemedicine. Subsequently, as long as the community standard of care is met, the Board will not enforce the requirement of a physical examination prior to prescribing medication, including controlled substances. With regard to telemedicine, licensees from other states are allowed to treat patients in Idaho without an Idaho license, as long as they have an unrestricted license to practice in their primary state and are not under investigative or disciplinary proceedings. All of these modifications serve to provide patients with more healthcare options in a time of crisis and to limit face to face interactions where possible to limit the exposure of clinicians and patients to COVID-19.

In order to protect the public by promoting a robust healthcare workforce, the Board has made temporary reductions in bureaucratic processes. First, temporary licenses have been expedited and fees waived for retired and inactive clinicians wishing to rejoin the workforce in order to treat Idahoans with COVID-19. Physicians wishing to supervise PAs in the state are no longer required to register but need to fill out an online attestation. Along these lines, there is a temporary pause on limiting the number of PAs each physician can supervise with an online COVID-19 Modified Delegation of Services, both meant to facilitate the response to changes in the clinical setting. The Board will continue to monitor the safety of and access to healthcare across the state and make modifications as needed. Normal business and investigative processes are occurring to this end.

Finally, the Board is currently working on a plan to transition patient care back to Idaho clinicians once the state of emergency is lifted. The goal is to maintain continuity of care established during these trying times.

Please find more information on the Board's website regarding the temporary changes in licensing protocols.

## CORONAVIRUS VACCINATIONS— FIRST PHASE OF COVID-19 VACCINES ADMINISTERED IN IDAHO

We've reached the light at the end of the tunnel – the beginning of the end of the coronavirus pandemic. Health leaders are rolling out the COVID-19 vaccine and we are one step closer to the return of some sense of normalcy. Idahoans are feeling hope but remaining cautious as the vaccine is distributed across the state and many are wondering when they will be able to get the vaccine.

On December 15, 2020, the first COVID-19 vaccines were administered to healthcare workers in Idaho just days after the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine was approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA). Then on December 18, 2020, the Moderna vaccine was also approved for EUA by the FDA. As of January 29, 2020, more than 114,000 vaccine doses have been administered across Idaho.

Governor Brad Little formed the [Idaho COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Committee \(CVAC\)](#) to advise on and assist with the prioritization of vaccines, on the implementation of the vaccination plan, and on communication and delivery of the vaccine. CVAC committee members represent stakeholders from across Idaho including healthcare systems and providers, immunization organizations, priority populations, and tribes. The state's goal for the vaccination program is to reduce transmission of the coronavirus, severe illness, and death; preserve a functioning healthcare system; and ensure transparency throughout the implementation of the vaccine plan.

CVAC reviewed the CDC guidance and determined the first doses will be given to healthcare workers, focusing on healthcare personnel and outpatient clinic staff who provide care for coronavirus patients, and long-term care facility residents. This also includes homecare providers, EMS, dental and pharmacy professionals, and other public health and emergency response workers who are unable to telework.

CVAC made recommendations to Governor Little on which populations should be prioritized in the next phase of vaccination. The recommendations focus on frontline essential workers, older adults, and include first responders, pre K-12 teachers and staff, correctional and detention facility staff, food processing workers, grocery and convenience store workers, Idaho National Guard, educational staff, and other essential workers. Beginning in

February the vaccine will be available to adults 65 years of age or older.

It is predicted that in March - April of 2021 the vaccine will be available to individuals with high-risk medical conditions. This phase includes people who are 16 – 64 with medical conditions that increase risk for severe COVID-19, and essential workers not included in the previous phases.

In May of 2021 the vaccine will likely be available to the general public according to CVAC estimates.

The COVID-19 vaccine is being distributed to Idaho's seven local public health districts. The number of vaccine doses and exact details are still being determined. The Idaho Department of Health and Welfare is expecting to receive weekly vaccine shipments going forward. Healthcare workers will be notified by their employer once vaccinations are available for their facility.

Health leaders across the state are working to ensure that vaccinators have the proper tools and training to administer the coronavirus vaccine. More information will be released on the next steps of the vaccine distribution plan in the coming weeks as additional vaccine shipments are available.

There's a path out of this pandemic but it will take a few months to come to an end as more Idahoans are vaccinated. We're in this final stretch together. Stay safe, wash your hands, and mask up.

Wishing you a happy and healthy 2021!

Irina Voyce, Management Assistant, Idaho State Board of Medicine

### FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- [Idaho COVID-19 Information](#)
- [Idaho COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- [Idaho COVID-19 Vaccination Providers](#)
- [Idaho COVID-19 Vaccine Advisory Committee \(CVAC\) Vaccine Prioritization](#)
- [Idaho COVID-19 Vaccine FAQ](#)
- [CDC COVID-19 Vaccination](#)
- [When can I get a COVID-19 vaccine in Idaho?](#)

## BOARD OF MEDICINE AND IDAHO MEDICAL ASSOCIATION STATEMENT ON PHYSICIAN NOTES FOR MASK EXEMPTIONS

On November 6, 2020, during the Board of Medicine quarterly meeting, the Board adopted the following position on physician notes for mask exemptions.

It has come to the attention of the Idaho Medical Association (IMA) and Idaho Board of Medicine (BOM) that some Idaho physicians and physician assistants are writing medical exemption notes upon request from patients who do not want to obey mask requirements. The IMA and BOM strongly urge physicians not to write these types of notes. A patient who is too sick to wear a mask should not be in public with an acute illness. The IMA and BOM advise physicians to

resist philosophical objection requests for medical notes to circumvent mask mandates.

IMA and BOM thank those of you who are doing your part in helping turn the tide of this pandemic.

Your actions and guidance to patients are critical to stopping the spread of COVID-19. We must all remain vigilant and continue taking steps to mitigate the spread of the virus to protect our Idaho communities. Widespread mask-wearing is a major step forward to ensure our schools and businesses can remain open for in-person interaction – this benefits children, families, workers and our economy.

## MASK UP! DURING PATIENT CARE

The Idaho Board of Medicine adopted the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) Statement on providers wearing face coverings during patient care.

The FSMB statement aligns with the Board's mission to protect and enhance the public's health, safety, and welfare by establishing and maintaining standards of excellence used in regulating the practice of medicine and ensuring quality health care for the citizens of Idaho through licensure, discipline, and education.

For additional information and updates visit the [Board of Medicine website](#) or the [Idaho COVID-19 page](#).

### [FSMB Statement on Wearing Face Coverings During Patient Care](#)

WASHINGTON, D.C. (October 6, 2020) – The Federation of State Medical Boards' Board of Directors released the following statement in response to reports from a number of state medical boards of complaints they are receiving about physicians and physician assistants failing to wear face coverings during patient care:

"Wearing a face covering is a harm-reduction strategy to help limit the spread of COVID-19, especially since physical distancing is not possible in health care settings. When seeing patients during in-person clinical encounters, physicians and physician assistants have a professional responsibility to wear a facial covering for their own protection, as well as that of their patients and society as a whole."



## BOARD OF MEDICINE FACEBOOK PAGE

The Board of Medicine is now on social media. Find us on Facebook and give us a like for the latest updates from the Board.

[Find us on Facebook!](#)



## AHA, AMA, and ANA Urge Health Care Professionals to Take COVID-19 Vaccine

December 15, 2020

An open letter to all health care professionals:

First, thank you. This year, health care professionals have sacrificed much to care for many, fighting COVID-19 skillfully, bravely and tirelessly. A grateful nation has watched and rightly bestowed upon you a legacy of respect. On behalf of our organizations and members, we add our own thanks for the tremendous dedication you each have shown in the face of a relentless pandemic. And yet, we must ask more.

While the arrival of vaccines is good news in the fight to defeat COVID-19, it does not signal an immediate end to our nation's suffering. Just as we have been pushing for adoption of the precautions we all know work – masking, hand hygiene and physical distancing – we must also push for high rates of vaccination within the U.S. population if we hope to overcome this virus. This will require trust in the COVID vaccination process, from the development, distribution and administration of a safe and effective vaccine as well as a willing public to get vaccinated.

As frontline caregivers, our essential role in protecting the health and wellbeing of our communities goes beyond the care we provide. As a valued and trusted voice, our example is perhaps the strongest health resource we have.

Our hope is simple; we urge you to get the COVID-19 vaccine and share your experience with others.

As physicians, nurses, hospital and health system leaders, we remain committed to supporting the rigorous scientific and regulatory process, establishing safe and effective processes for administering vaccines to all who are eligible and choose to get vaccinated, and to making critical information about vaccines available as it is released.

Thank you for working to improve the health and safety of our country.

Your continued partners in health,

American Hospital Association  
 American Medical Association  
 American Nurses Association





**The Board of Medicine conducts random CME audits! If you are selected, be prepared to provide documentation.**

## FREE MEDICATION-ASSISTED TREATMENT (MAT) WAIVER TRAINING

ECHO Idaho is offering a free Medication for Addiction Treatment (MAT) waiver training over Zoom on Monday, February 22, 2021.

Providers with a MAT (or x-) waiver are vital in Idaho because they can dispense buprenorphine, which can help people struggling with opioid use disorder attain recovery.

For more information, visit ECHO Idaho's MAT waiver webpage, [uidaho.edu/echo/mat](https://uidaho.edu/echo/mat), or contact Kayla Blades, project coordinator for ECHO Idaho: [kblades@uidaho.edu](mailto:kblades@uidaho.edu), 208-364-4569.



*"As a result of completing the MAT waiver training, I now have the knowledge, ability and confidence to be a part in helping someone in their journey of recovery."*

— Ann Hawkins, APRN, Hope, Idaho

## VHA EES PROVIDES FREE, ACCREDITED EDUCATIONAL OFFERINGS TO COMMUNITY PROVIDERS

The Veterans Health Administration Employee Education System (VHA EES) has historically provided education and training to VA employees only. However, since the establishment of [VHA TRAIN](#), EES has worked with various VA offices to make Veteran-focused health care training available to public health care providers in order to ensure our Nation's Veterans are receiving the same level of care whether they visit a VA facility or seek care from a public provider. This goal was further amplified by the [MISSION Act](#) of 2018. EES is proud to be able offer timely, reliable and essential educational offerings to community providers in a variety of easily accessible and cutting-edge formats, much of which offer continuing education (CE) credits.

Clinicians interested in earning no-cost CE can [view a catalog of courses available via the VHA TRAIN platform](#), and [sign up for email announcements](#) when courses are added to VHA TRAIN.

In addition, VA has also established a [COVID-19 training site](#) for community providers offering Covid-19 training programs/resources offered from a variety of organizations and vetted through the VA.

For additional information contact Rebecca McHugh, EES Senior Marketing and Communication Specialist.

Phone: 314-435-8865

Email: [Rebecca.McHugh@va.gov](mailto:Rebecca.McHugh@va.gov)



# Recognizing 50+ Years



The Board would like to recognize medical practitioners with a long-term commitment to providing quality care to the citizens of Idaho. The physicians below have maintained active medical licenses in the state of Idaho for 50+ years.

Thank you for your service!

Gary Thomas, MD (1/12/1960)  
 Harald Wiedemann, MD (7/15/1963)  
 Harry Chinchinian, MD (1/14/1964)  
 Walter Hair, MD (1/11/1965)  
 Boe Roger, MD (7/13/1965)  
 Thad Scholes, MD (7/11/1966)  
 Thoreson Theodore, MD (1/9/1967)  
 Vernon Goltry, MD (1/12/70)

Gregory Kadlec, MD (1/12/70)  
 John Gibney, MD (1/13/1970)  
 David Beckner, MD (1/13/1970)  
 Sara Cifrese, MD (7/14/1970)  
 Rocco Cifrese, MD (7/14/1970)  
 Robert Bauer Jr., MD (7/14/1970)  
 Darrell Kammer Jr., MD (7/14/1970)  
 Dean Sorensen, MD (1/10/1971)

## HEALTH CARE WORKER APPRECIATION MONTH

Idaho Governor Brad Little proclaimed December 2020 as “Health Care Worker Appreciation Month” in recognition of our providers for their service during the coronavirus pandemic. Governor Little issued the proclamation on December 16, 2020, asking Idahoans to share their gratitude.

The Board of Medicine appreciates your service to Idahoans and will continue to acknowledge our health care heroes throughout 2021. Thank you for all you do!

## Gov. Little issues proclamation for Health Care Worker Appreciation Month in Idaho

*Wednesday December 16, 2020*

Boise, Idaho – Governor Brad Little issued a proclamation today naming December Health Care Worker Appreciation Month in Idaho.

“I ask all Idahoans to share their gratitude for health care heroes in Idaho,” Governor Little said. “We can show our gratitude by minimizing transmissible moments this holiday season. Wear a mask, avoid gatherings with people outside your household, continue to keep safe physical distance, and wash your hands regularly. As individuals, we must choose to do all we can to combat COVID-19 in order to relieve pressure on Idaho’s health care workers.”

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Idaho’s health care workers have exemplified what it means to be heroic. Workers at Idaho’s hospital and long-term care facilities put the safety and wellbeing of the patients and residents in their charge ahead of their own health. Staff are also trying to meet social and emotional needs of patients because many families are still unable to visit their loved ones.

Idahoans are encouraged to reach out to their local health care facility and ask how they can help during the crisis. Interested applicants can apply at <https://idaho.carefortheaging.org/>. The Idaho Health Care Association will then match you to a facility in need.





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