

September 16, 2024

Salt Lake County Council  
2001 S. State St. #N2-200  
Salt Lake City, UT 84114

Re: Purchase of COVID Vaccine and Payment of Administration Fees

Dear Councilmembers:

Respiratory virus season, including flu, COVID and RSV is upon us. COVID cases are already present throughout our communities.

The updated COVID vaccine was approved in late August. The Health Department will be providing this vaccine during its outreach events and seeks to also provide the vaccine at upcoming County staff vaccination events in October.

However, the landscape for providing COVID vaccinations has changed dramatically since last year. The vaccine, which at one time was funded entirely by the federal government, became “commercialized” last fall. This change means there is a very limited supply of free COVID vaccination available to public health departments. The Salt Lake County Health Department anticipates it will receive just 600 doses of free COVID vaccine this year and these doses must be reserved for high-risk individuals in high-risk settings. In comparison, last year the state provided more than 2,600 free COVID vaccines to Salt Lake County utilizing ARPA funding, which is no longer available.

People with insurance will have the cost of the COVID immunization and associated administration fee (approximately \$114 total per dose) covered by their health insurance plan. However, those without insurance will be responsible to cover this cost. For many this is a financial hardship.

The Department will be hosting two vaccine clinics for staff in October. Temporary employees are among those who may be uninsured and would be responsible for covering the cost of the COVID vaccine. We seek to offer no-cost immunizations to these employees at our clinic events next month.

We also seek to offer a limited number of no-cost immunizations for uninsured Salt Lake County residents during immunization outreach events. People living without insurance often have comorbid conditions, live in more crowded housing, and/or work in public facing jobs where they interact with people who may have COVID or other respiratory viruses.

The Department will utilize underspend to purchase 2,200 doses of COVID vaccine (1,000 doses for use at the employee clinic, and 1,200 doses for use at community outreach clinics). The unrealized revenue from providing these vaccines at no-cost (the cost of the vaccine and the administration cost) can be covered by the Department’s Health Fund. Total costs are

anticipated to be \$250,800. Each vaccine dose costs \$100 through current contract and the administration fee is \$14.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Dorothy Adams  
Executive Director

Human Services Director

Mayor or Designee