



Policy Statement

The IAFC Recommends That Fire Departments Be Prepared For and Have the Capacity to Participate in Phase II of the National Smallpox Vaccination Plan

Recognizing that an outbreak of smallpox would be considered a world health emergency, the IAFC recommends that fire departments should be knowledgeable about the national smallpox vaccination program which is expected to be implemented in three phases:

- I. Making the vaccine available, on a voluntary basis, to public health and hospital workers who would be charged with conducting the initial investigation and treatment of a suspected smallpox outbreak;
- II. Making the vaccine available, on a voluntary basis, to emergency services and health care workers, including the fire service; and
- III. Making the vaccine available, on a voluntary basis, to members of the general public.

The IAFC further recommends that local fire chiefs should:

- Establish an active and effective relationship with their local public health department to ensure constant communication on the vaccination program. Local fire chiefs should join with other emergency services officials and public health leaders to develop plans to find vaccination locations, store and administer the vaccine, and to help educate the public on how to use the vaccination system.
- Initiate a comprehensive educational campaign for their employees and their families.
- Educate local elected officials about the public policy and financial impacts of a vaccination program.
- Begin preparing their departments for operational impacts as a result of the vaccination program.
- Anticipate the system impacts if the vaccination program is made available to the general public.

Fire and emergency services leaders should reference the document to be published by the IAFC's Smallpox Vaccination Working Group to assist with implementation of the bulleted items listed above.

This policy should be considered in the context of current information and federal policy. It should be further recognized that this is a dynamic and evolving issue and that this policy is subject to modification as necessary.

Category: Terrorism

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