



For Immediate Release:
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Pritzker Administration Thanks Physicians for Their Service in Battling the COVID-19 Pandemic on National Doctors' Day

SPRINGFIELD - The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR), and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) wish to thank physicians in Illinois in recognition of National Doctors' Day for their dedication, commitment and selfless service during the COVID-19 pandemic. There are currently more than 48,000 physicians who hold Illinois licenses.

"I want to say thank you to all the doctors who have worked tirelessly during this pandemic and at times have put their own health at risk," **said IDPH Director Dr. Ngozi Ezike.** "There is a tradition of delivering greeting cards to physicians for National Doctors' Day and I would like to encourage people to do that this year as a way to say thank you and to celebrate all physicians for the work they do and the sacrifices they have made during this pandemic."

"For more than a year, Illinois' brave physicians have worked tirelessly to perform COVID tests, treat patients who test positive, and now aid in administering vaccines," **said Deborah Hagan, Secretary of the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation.** "We are truly thankful for their service in helping the people of Illinois."

"We salute our fearless doctors for their dedication during a time when the risks of treating the sick have never been greater," **said IEMA Director Alicia Tate-Nadeau.** "In addition to these doctors, we should thank their families for their sacrifice and courage. While the battle against COVID-19 continues, each day we are closer to ending this pandemic. None of this would be possible without our healthcare heroes."

From the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Illinois took proactive steps to increase the number of health care professionals in the workforce. In March 2020, IDFPR issued a variance allowing Illinois physicians whose license status was inactive, non-renewed, or expired that also satisfy an additional set of specific criteria to restore their licenses temporarily during the pandemic.

In addition, IDFPR also issued a proclamation allowing out-of-state physicians to provide care to Illinois residents affected by COVID-19, as long as they obtained a temporary practice permit and followed other guidelines. Because of these actions, more than 2,000 additional physicians are now allowed to provide care in Illinois.

National Doctors' Day, which was first celebrated in 1933, is held each year on March 30 to celebrate the contribution of physicians who serve our country by caring for its residents. This year, you can help doctors in the battle against COVID-19 by doing the following:

- Continue to take [preventative steps](#), including washing your hands and staying home when you're sick.
- Continue to follow [state guidance](#) regarding COVID-19, including on the [use of face coverings](#).
- Schedule and receive your COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you can. [All Illinois residents 16 and older](#) will be eligible to receive the vaccine on April 12. A list of who is eligible to receive the vaccine now may be found [here](#).

There are now more than 900 vaccination locations in Illinois open to the public, and these locations can be viewed online at <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/>. For those having difficulty navigating online services to make vaccination appointments, the Vaccine Appointment Call Center may be able to assist. This hotline is available seven days a week from 6:00 a.m. to midnight. Call agents' primary role is to help individuals navigate the various online registration sites. However, if the individual does not have access to online services or is unable to navigate the site, the call agent will make an appointment on the caller's behalf. The Vaccine Appointment Call Center phone number is 1-833-621-1284.