March 5, 2021

Chair Deborah Kafoury  
Multnomah County Commission  
501 SE Hawthorne Blvd., Suite 600  
Portland, OR 97214-3587

Dear Chair Kafoury and Commissioners:

Housing Oregon is reaching out to the Multnomah County elected officials and Public Health Department to help ensure residents of low-income affordable housing communities are educated and ready to sign-up for COVID vaccinations when they are eligible.

Housing Oregon is a membership-based statewide association of affordable housing providers and Community Development Corporations (CDCs) committed to serving and supporting low-income Oregonians across the housing needs spectrum – from homeless to homeowner.

Our member organizations provide housing for many Oregonians currently or soon to be eligible for the vaccine including seniors, BIPOC communities, frontline workers, and people with disabilities and others with underlying health conditions. These populations are disproportionately represented in many of our members’ apartment communities.

Representatives with the state and Providence Health & Services recently joined one of our policy committees and recognized the opportunity to coordinate with local health departments to reach these vulnerable constituencies. Based on their advice we are surveying our members to identify percentages of tenants from these more vulnerable population groups and mapping multi-family housing by county in case that helps with siting future vaccination clinics.

Some of our members have Resident Services staff who may be able to help distribute educational information about decreasing vaccine hesitancy, show residents how to sign-up for notification through OHA and scheduling appointments, coordinate transportation to nearby vaccination sites, and reaching out to tenants personally when there is a need.
clinics, or assist with mobile on-site clinics, especially for those with mobility issues.

We recognize public health agency staff are stretched thin across the State. We extend this offer recognizing some of our members may be in a unique position to help connect those disproportionately affected by the COVID pandemic with your efforts to engage hard-to-reach constituencies.

We look forward to being connected with appropriate staff. Please contact Brian Hoop, Executive Director with Housing Oregon, at 503-475-6056 or brian@housingoregon.org.

Sincerely,

Brian Hoop
Executive Director
Housing Oregon

CC:
- Jessica Guernsey, MPH Director, Public Health Multnomah County Public Health Administrator
- Ebony Sloan Clarke, LCSW, MSW Interim Director, Health Department
- Kim Toeys, MPH Director, Communicable Disease, Harm Reduction, Youth Sexual Health Equity Programs
- Jennifer Vines, MD, MPH Health Officer Multnomah County, Oregon Tri-County Health Officer, Clackamas, Multnomah, Washington Counties