



January 27, 2021

Dear Governor,

I am writing to you today on behalf of the 25,000 front-line campus housing and residence life staff who, by the requirements of their jobs, live in residence halls, interface with large populations of students, respond to emergencies and serve students in isolation/quarantine spaces. These professionals, along with those front-line staff in food service, housekeeping, maintenance and custodial services, urge you to prioritize the distribution of COVID-19 vaccines to those individuals who come into direct contact with students and therefore face increased risk of exposure and infection because of the requirements of their jobs.

ACUHO-I is the professional home for campus housing and residence life professionals at colleges and universities around the world. In normal times, these personnel are essential to the functioning of our residential colleges and universities and to the health, safety, and success of students; during COVID-19, they are the linchpin that make continued operations possible and that keep community members safe. Even institutions that have reduced or eliminated their on-campus offerings have students on campus due to food and housing insecurity, which means that these staff members continue to work and are subject to congregate living environments.

Today, as spring semester begins at institutions across the country, live-in campus housing/residence life staff--including undergraduate resident assistants (RAs) and graduate hall directors--are serving as front-line staff and first responders as part of their on-call duties. They live in campus residential facilities and are charged with supporting and responding to student needs. They coordinate testing, tracing, and transport to quarantine/isolation spaces on campus as well as to local hospitals when necessary. They provide food and medication delivery, wellness checks, and enforcement of campus COVID-19 protocols. On many campuses, live-in faculty members support the academic mission of the institution by sharing residential spaces with students. Housekeeping and custodial/maintenance workers maintain and clean living and

common spaces in campus residential buildings, including COVID-19 isolation and quarantine space.

ACUHO-I is grateful for the decision made by many states to prioritize vaccination for individuals who work in congregate living facilities or in isolation/quarantine facilities. We urge that every state follow this approach and ensure that residential life and housing staff and other campus front-line staff are included within these priority groups. These protections are vital for the safe operation of the nation's colleges and universities and for the continued academic progress of the nation's students. ACUHO-I is immensely proud of our members for the additional time and effort they exert to ensure their colleges and universities can reopen safely and for the crucial education, research, and services they provide so their communities can continue. Campus housing professionals are acutely aware that their diligence has immediate implications for their institution's financial stability, and that providing a positive experience for students, despite the arduous conditions under which they're living and learning, has direct and long-lasting effects on retention and persistence.

In our role as the global association for college and university housing professionals, we are committed to doing whatever is possible to advocate for our members' health, safety, and success as they continue to do their jobs to the best of their abilities in a climate where their own health and safety is potentially at risk. We would welcome the opportunity to further discuss the need for vaccine prioritization for college and university housing staff and thank you for your efforts to date to protect the residents of your state, especially those who live, work, and study on the campuses of your colleges and universities.

If ACUHO-I can be of assistance as your team continues to navigate this health emergency, please do not hesitate to contact me directly via email ([mdeniro@acuho-i.org](mailto:mdeniro@acuho-i.org)) or by telephone (614-292-0099).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary M. DeNiro".

**Mary DeNiro**  
ACUHO-I CEO