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## **Statement from the Department of Health**

The Washington State Department of Health is closely monitoring progress toward development of a vaccine for COVID-19. We are engaged in vaccine planning efforts and we will be ready to distribute a safe and effective vaccine as soon as the time comes. However, all vaccine candidates are still in clinical trials to determine their safety and efficacy.

DOH's position is that any COVID-19 vaccine should complete Phase 3 trials before being distributed, unless an independent board of scientists reviewing the data finds otherwise based on data from those trials. At this crucial juncture, it is incumbent upon the federal government to critically evaluate these new vaccines for their safety and efficacy in an unbiased way.

In the meantime, DOH will continue working with federal and local partners to build the infrastructure needed for distribution. When a vaccine is ready, we will be prepared to deploy it in a manner ensure that is equitable, safe and timely for the people of Washington.

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