

Message from Acushnet Fire Chief Gallagher after tour of City of New Bedford's COVID Vaccine clinic

"Yesterday morning, the Council on Aging Directors, Health Agents and Fire Chiefs from Acushnet and Fairhaven toured the city of New Bedford's Covid Vaccine clinic on Hillman Street. This tour followed several Zoom meetings where officials from both communities came together to plan for the local distribution of vaccines by sharing the resources of both towns. We agreed that a joint effort would be more effective and more efficient for both populations.

"Unfortunately, before we got back to our respective towns, the state pulled the rug out from under us.

"Instead of going to an Acushnet or Fairhaven building and receiving vaccine shots from local Paramedics and having the administrative work done by local Health Departments, residents from the two towns must now work against thousands of others to secure a spot at Gillette, Fenway, Circuit City, or some other state run mass vaccination site.



Acushnet Fire & EMS photo.

"We were ready to do it locally. Both towns filed for and received approval from the state to order, receive and store vaccine. Both towns worked on plans, stepped-up training, and even started to make lists of eligible residents. We were ready, very ready, to pull the trigger.

"Unfortunately, in a decision very much like that to limit state-run Covid testing to the big cities, smaller municipalities have been shut out. With testing, we could go it alone. With vaccination, we can't.

"And that is regrettable.

"Please know that both communities wanted to do this. We planned. We toured. We met. We discussed. We fine-tuned. Simply put, we were ready.

"Please also know that when the state admits that their new policy failed, we will, once again, be ready."-Kevin A. Gallagher.