

About the COVID-19 Vaccine Staff Requirement

What is the deadline to be vaccinated? Do I have to be fully vaccinated by that date?

- We are waiting on CMS guidance regarding next which we expect to include a national deadline for compliance.
- While this deadline has not been set, we encourage all employees to get vaccinated as soon as possible.
- Once a date has been set, all employees must be fully vaccinated at that time.

What does fully vaccinated mean?

In general, people are considered fully vaccinated:

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
- 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine

The recommended interval between doses is 21 days for Pfizer-BioNTech and 28 days for Moderna.

I am fully vaccinated. Do I have to receive the booster shot to comply with the new guideline?

- We expect to hear more about this from CMS in the coming weeks.

I've had COVID-19. Do I still have to get vaccinated?

- Yes. Public health experts recommend receiving the COVID-19 vaccine even if you have previously had the virus.
- While your body produces antibodies when you have the virus, we cannot know for certain how protective they are against reinfection.

What if I contract COVID-19 between now and the deadline?

- As soon as you have cleared from the health department and out of quarantine, you are eligible to be vaccinated.
- If you have received an antibody infusion, you must wait 90 days to be vaccinated. If these timelines prohibit you from being fully vaccinated by the deadline, please contact your HR/BOM for guidance.

What happens if the deadline comes and I'm not vaccinated?

- If an employee is not fully vaccinated by the deadline, it will result in a voluntary resignation, effective immediately.
- Employees in good standing will remain eligible for rehire once they become vaccinated.

I work in an Independent Living, Assisted Living or Personal Care Community. Does this policy apply to me?

- All Exceptional Living Centers employees will be asked to follow these policies and procedures, regardless of position or care level.

How do I sign up for a COVID-19 vaccine?

- Ask your Executive Director or Vaccine Ambassador about the next onsite vaccine clinic. In the meantime, employees can be vaccinated at Walgreens. COVID-19 vaccines are free to all Americans.

Can I choose which vaccine to get?

- Yes. While certain vaccines may only be available at our onsite vaccine clinics, employees are welcome to receive any brand they prefer.
- Please note that it is recommended that subsequent injections (second dose or booster) are the same brand as any previous injections (i.e. if your first dose of the vaccine was Moderna, your second dose and booster dose should also be Moderna).

I am fully vaccinated. Do I have to receive the booster shot to comply with the new guideline?

- We expect to hear more about this from CMS in the coming weeks.

If an employee has a reaction to COVID vaccine, will it be covered under workers' compensation?

- Workers' compensation insurance helps protect businesses and their employees from financial loss when an employee is hurt on the job or gets sick from a work-related cause.
- If an employee has a reaction to a COVID vaccine they received at work which results in a financial loss, we encourage them to apply for workers' compensation.
- For more information, contact your center Human Resources or Business Office Manager or email benefits@exceptionallivingcenters.com.

Who do I contact if I have other questions or concerns?

- Talk with your Executive Director, Vaccine Ambassador or email benefits@exceptionallivingcenters.com.

About Vaccine Exemptions

How do I apply for medical or religious exemptions?

- Ask your HR/BOM for an exemption form.
- Medical exemptions require a letter from your physician and a 10-minute phone screening with the corporate office.
- Religious-related exemptions require a letter outlining the following points
 - Identify religious denomination
 - Identify specific church and contact at that church
 - Provide information as to the duration of membership with specific church
 - Identify church doctrine on which claimed exemption is based
 - Identify church's history with respect to its position on vaccination prior to COVID
- Employees granted medical or religious exemptions will be required to wear full PPE while on duty and agree to regular (daily or weekly) testing.
- Please remember, simply submitting the request does not guarantee it will be accommodated.
- Questions about medical and religious exemptions can be submitted to benefits@exceptionallivingcenters.com.

Will current exemptions be honored?

- Anyone who has already submitted exemption requests do not have to make a secondary submission. We will reach out to the employee with any additional questions that may be necessary to adjudicate the request.

When should we expect to hear a decision based on exemptions once submitted?

- Every submission will be reviewed by the corporate office for its unique circumstances and the employee will receive a written response once a determination has been made.
- Our original goal was to reply to all submission requests within 10 business days. Since President Biden's announcement on August 18th, no further details of the vaccine requirement have been released. At this time we intend to review the written policy prior to providing feedback on any exemption applications. Please continue to submit exemption applications as we await the written policy from The Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

Will ELC hire new employees that have exemptions?

- Yes. New employees will follow the same policies and procedures as current employees once this is in effect.

About the COVID-19 Vaccine

Why should I get a COVID-19 vaccine?

- Getting vaccinated will help protect you, your family members, friends, coworkers, and our most vulnerable—like long term care residents—from COVID-19. The vaccines are highly effective in preventing individuals from getting sick or seriously ill from COVID-19 as well as slowing the spread.

Are the vaccines effective?

- Extremely. All COVID-19 vaccines have been proven to be highly effective at reducing the risk of severe illness, hospitalization, and death. Even in the face of new variants, public health experts agree that the vaccines continue to offer high protection.

Are the vaccines safe?

- Yes. The vaccines have been subject to the most extensive safety monitoring effort in U.S. history. They were thoroughly tested in hundreds of thousands of individuals and the data from those clinical trials was rigorously examined.

Are there side effects?

- You may have some side effects, which are normal signs that your body is building protection. These side effects may affect your ability to do daily activities, but they should go away in a few days. Some people have no side effects. You may experience:
 - Pain, swelling or redness at the injection site.
 - General symptoms up to two days after injection such as fever, chills, fatigue, muscle or joint pain, or headache

Do these vaccines cause allergic reactions?

- Serious allergic reactions have been documented but are extremely rare and generally occur in people who have a history of severe allergic reactions.

Do these vaccines affect fertility?

- No. There is no known link between the vaccines and infertility. In fact, there is growing evidence about the safety of vaccinations during pregnancy.

Which vaccine should I get/which one is the best?

- Medical experts strongly recommend that you take the first vaccine that is offered to you, to ensure rapid protection against COVID-19. All of them have been shown to be safe and highly effective at preventing serious illness from COVID-19.
- Moderna and Johnson & Johnson have been approved under emergency use authorization (EUA).

- On August 23, 2021, the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine (market name Comirnaty) was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for the prevention of COVID-19 disease in individuals 16 years of age and older.

About the COVID-19 Booster

HHS announced a plan to begin offering COVID-19 vaccine booster shots this fall. CDC's independent advisory committee, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, will continue to meet and discuss data on the evolution of the pandemic and the use of COVID-19 vaccines.

When will the booster shot be available?

- Federal health officials are prepared to offer booster shots for people in the U.S. beginning the week of September 20, 2021.

When should I get a booster shot?

- Federal health officials are recommending booster shots 8 months after an individual's second dose. A booster shot is recommended as protection from the vaccine wanes over time.

Can I get any type of COVID-19 vaccine for the third doses?

- No. You should receive the same brand of vaccine you received for your first and second doses, either Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech. Administration of the J&J vaccine did not begin in the U.S. until March 2021, and health officials expect more data on J&J in the next few weeks.

How do I get a booster shot?

- Booster shots will be available during the regular vaccine clinics or at your local pharmacy once available.

About COVID-19

What are variants?

- Viruses are germs that only become "active" when they enter, or infect, a cell or a person.
- The common cold, RSV, Flu, Chickenpox, Norovirus (aka - the stomach bug) and COVID-19 are all common viruses we see in the long-term care community.
- Viruses often try to "trick" a person's immune systems by changing ever so slightly. This change, or mutation, causes new variants. This is common and has been seen with influenza and now COVID-19.
- These variants - such as COVID's highly contagious Delta variant - often have different symptoms and can be more contagious.
- Since antibiotics are ineffective for treating viruses, a vaccine is the best defense for viruses such as the flu and COVID-19 to reduce the severity of symptoms and the duration of the illness.

How are viruses such as COVID-19 spread?

- Touching an object or surface with a virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose or eyes
- Droplets in the air from coughing or sneezing
- Close contact to someone with a virus, even if they have no symptoms

What are symptoms of COVID-19?

Symptoms of COVID-19 and its variants can vary from person to person. They include:

- Headache
- Runny nose
- Congestion
- Coughing
- Sneezing
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste
- Loss of smell
- Lethargic
- Diarrhea
- Fever

How can I protect myself and others from COVID-19?

- Get vaccinated
- Wash your hands often
- Cover your cough and sneeze

- Stay away from others if you are sick
- Early testing if you have any symptoms
- Wear a mask

About the PTO Benefit

- Our Protect The Others Free PTO program has been extended. All employees who choose to be vaccinated will be awarded with extra PTO (half day for part time employees, full day for full time employees).
- Eligible employees must be hired before the date that the first vaccination shot is required, per the regulations.
- New employees, vaccinated prior to employment with ELC, are not eligible for the additional PTO.
- The employees will only receive the PTO hours once they receive their initial COVID-19 immunization. Additional PTO will not be granted for booster vaccinations.
- Once the “Certification” is logged into Paycor, the PTO hours will be added into the employee’s PTO “available balance” to be used at a date of their choosing. It will not be paid out automatically on the next check.