

## **Sun Health Vaccine Mandate FAQs** **(Version Includes Q&A from Town Halls)**

### **General Vaccine Mandate Overview**

President Joe Biden recently announced that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), under his administration's guidance, will require that all nursing home staff be vaccinated against COVID-19. The President took this measure to encourage more people to get the COVID-19 vaccine. More than 15,000 "nursing homes" nationwide, which includes Sun Health's Skilled Nursing Centers at Grandview Terrace and La Loma Village, receive funding from CMS. If organizations do not comply, they will no longer receive federal Medicare and Medicaid funding for healthcare services provided to those insured by Medicare.

A deadline for vaccination was not specifically addressed by President Biden. Prior to President Biden's announcement, Sun Health announced, under direction from the board of directors, that we are requiring all team members be vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccine as a condition of employment. Important points from this mandate are:

- 1) All team members must receive either their first dose of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine or the single dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine by October 1, 2021, or qualify for an approved medical or religious exemption.
- 2) Team members receiving the two-dose vaccines must be fully vaccinated by November 1.
- 3) Those who do not comply will be considered to have resigned their employment.
- 4) Given that Sun Health is a Medicare provider, we are waiting to see if the CMS mandate impacts Sun Health's stated deadlines.

We are proud of the fact that Sun Health was ahead of the curve with our mandate, knowing it is the right thing to do for our residents/members/donors, our families, neighbors, and each other. The Arizona Department of Health Services reports nearly all cases of COVID-19 cases are among those unvaccinated. The Centers for Disease Control and Infection reports nearly all COVID-19 related deaths are among those who are unvaccinated as well.

### **How do I show proof of vaccination?**

You will need to provide your proof of vaccination card to Human Resources so it can be copied and documented. It will be returned to you.

### **What if I have a medical or religious exemption?**

All team members must comply with the COVID-19 vaccine mandate or provide an approved medical or religious exemption by October 1, 2021. This form is available on the Sun Health Employee Portal. If you don't have access to [Employees.SunHealth.org](https://Employees.SunHealth.org), please ask your supervisor or local HR representative.

### **What will happen if I don't comply with the COVID-19 vaccination requirements?**

Anyone who will not complete an exemption, have the J&J vaccine, or have a first dose of either Moderna or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine by October 1 OR have both doses of Moderna or Pfizer by November 1 will be considered to have resigned his or her position at Sun Health.

### **Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe/FDA approved?**

On August 23, the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine received full FDA approval, while the Moderna and Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccines have all been approved for emergency use to prevent the spread and mortality of COVID-19. The Moderna vaccine, which was administered on Sun Health campuses, is expected to receive full FDA approval later this year. J&J also is expected to file for full approval.

### **Does it matter which type of vaccine I get?**

Sun Health accepts Pfizer, Moderna, and the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccines to be used for vaccination status. While all three vaccines are strongly effective against contracting severe illness and spreading COVID-19, they vary in effectiveness. The official efficacy rates of the vaccines are: Pfizer (95%), Moderna (94.1%) and Johnson & Johnson (66.3%).

### **What are the common side-effects of the COVID-19 Vaccine?**

The CDC states that some recipients of the COVID-19 Vaccine have experienced mild flu-like symptoms such as:

- Swelling, redness, and pain at injection site
- Fever
- Headache
- Tiredness
- Muscle pain
- Chills
- Nausea

These side effects may affect your ability to do daily activities, however they are normal and should go away within a few days after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

### **What are possible serious side-effects of the COVID-19 vaccine?**

According to the CDC, possible side-effects after receiving one or more doses of the COVID-19 Vaccine are:

- Anaphylaxis (severe allergic reaction)
- Thrombosis with Thrombocytopenia Syndrome (with J&J/Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine)

Both side-effects are **rare** and long-term side effects are unlikely.

### **Do I still need to wear a mask if I am fully vaccinated?**

Yes, all Sun Health team members must continue to comply with the mask mandate regardless of vaccination status. This mandate is subject to review as the conditions change.

### **Do I still need to take COVID-19 tests if I am fully vaccinated?**

You may need to take COVID-19 tests if you are fully vaccinated, depending upon CDC guidelines and requirements from Sun Health, on a case-by-case basis.

### **Is the vaccine free of charge to me?**

All types of the COVID-19 Vaccine are 100% free to the public.

**Is there a bonus for receiving the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Yes, you will receive a \$100 bonus when you submit proof of full vaccination by November 1, with a first dose of Moderna or Pfizer, or the Johnson & Johnson vaccine required by October 1.

**How do I get the vaccine?**

By visiting [azdhs.gov](http://azdhs.gov) and going to "Topics" tab and selecting "COVID-19," you can access a map of vaccination sites near you. From there, you can choose a vaccine location and register for your vaccination appointment. Additionally, Sun Health may again offer on-campus vaccine clinics. Information about these clinics will be shared once scheduled.

**Do I get time off if I have side effects from the vaccine?**

The COVID-19 vaccine does not typically cause severe side effects. However, if you are not feeling well enough to work in the days following your vaccination, your time off will be covered by COVID-19 Non-Worked Pay.

**What percentage of our team members are currently vaccinated?**

Less than 60% of our team members are vaccinated, and this is slowly increasing.

**What percentage of our residents and members are currently vaccinated?**

More than 90% of our residents and members are vaccinated.

**Who else in the nation is requiring the COVID-19 vaccine?**

Government agencies, healthcare organizations (including Banner Health, Mayo Clinic, Honor Health), many senior living organizations (including Brookdale and Ensign), American Senior Housing Association, LeadingAge, and increasingly many other organizations are requiring the COVID-19 vaccine as a condition of employment.

**Who does the CDC recommend receive the COVID-19 vaccine?**

The CDC recommends all adults and children 16 or older get vaccinated against COVID-19.

**What if I recently had COVID-19? Can proof of this be used in lieu of getting the vaccine?**

The CDC has stated that if you have not developed enough long-term antibodies from having COVID-19, you should receive the vaccine. You will need to speak with your medical provider about this, and if he or she feels that you should not receive the vaccine at this time, you will need to have your provider complete a medical exemption for you.

**Can I get the vaccine if I just recently (in the last 90 days) was diagnosed with COVID-19?**

You may still receive the vaccine, however, check with your medical provider before getting vaccinated in this circumstance.

**Will there be a requirement for a booster vaccine at this time?**

The CDC recently announced that boosters will be available for those who were fully vaccinated more than six months prior. At this time, Sun Health does not require a booster vaccine for COVID-19. However, this is subject to change.

**Will we require outside people and guests to be vaccinated to enter our Sun Health locations?**

Not at this time. Guests are required to wear masks in indoor settings, along with all Sun Health team members. Additionally, Sun Health is strongly recommending that everyone wear masks in any public setting, especially indoors. All guests and visitors entering a Sun Health location are required to be screened upon entry.

**What if I am under 18 years old?**

If you are under 18 you may still choose to receive the vaccine. However, if you are under 18 and your parent/guardian does not allow you to receive the vaccine, you are eligible for an exemption. Please contact HR to file an exemption before October 1, 2021.

**I still have questions.**

If you still have questions or concerns, please speak with your manager as soon as possible or contact your Human Resources representative.