



Policy and Procedure: Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination for All Staff

Date: February 24, 2022

Approved: Tony Anderson

Policy

The State Public Health Officer of the State of California has found that vaccination against COVID-19 is the most effective means of preventing infection with the COVID-19 virus, and subsequent transmission and outbreaks. The State Public Health Officer of the State of California has ordered that all health care workers must be vaccinated to reduce the chance of transmission to vulnerable populations (CDPH Order). Health care facilities have been found to be particularly high-risk settings where COVID-19 outbreaks can have severe consequences for vulnerable populations including hospitalization, severe illness, and death. On Tuesday September 28, 2021, in support of the CDPH orders, the California Department of Developmental Services (DDS) directed Valley Mountain Regional Center (VMRC) ensure all staff are fully vaccinated by November 30, 2021. On December 23, 2021 DDS extended the Directive to include mandatory booster shots by attaching to the September 28th Directive. Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) section 4639.6 authorizes the Director of the Department of Developmental Services (Department) to issue directives to regional centers as the Director deems necessary to protect consumer rights, health, safety, or welfare, or in accordance with WIC section 4434. VMRC contracts with DDS to meet the state's obligations to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities in San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Amador, Calaveras, and Tuolumne Counties, and must comply with any directive issued by the Director pursuant to this section. Pursuant to WIC section 4639.6.

As of February 22, 2022 the CDPH now allows for workers with completed primary series vaccination and recent infection to defer booster dose by up to 90 days from infection. Employees who provide proof of COVID-19 infection may defer booster administration for up to 90 days from the date of first positive test or clinical diagnosis, which in some situations, may extend the booster dose requirement beyond March 1st. Workers not yet eligible for boosters must be in compliance no later than 15 days after the recommended timeframe above for receiving the booster dose. Workers with a deferral due to a proven COVID-19 infection must be in compliance no later than 15 days after the expiration of their deferral.

COVID-19 Vaccinations are Mandatory for All VMRC Workers by November 30, 2021

All employees must have the first dose of a one-dose regimen or the second dose of a two-dose regimen by November 30, 2021. Two-dose vaccines include: Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna or vaccine authorized by the World Health Organization. The one-dose vaccine is: Johnson and Johnson [J&J]/Janssen. All COVID-19 vaccines that are currently authorized for emergency use can be found at the following links:

- i. US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), FDA COVID-19 Vaccines [webpage](#).
- ii. World Health Organization (WHO), WHO COVID-19 Vaccines [webpage](#).

COVID-19 Booster Shot Vaccinations are Mandatory for All VMRC Workers

According to the CDPH, the requirement for booster doses goes into effect December 22, 2021, and the deadline for booster-eligible employees to receive their booster is March 1, 2022, or within 15 days of becoming eligible for a booster if they are not eligible as of March 1, 2022.” All employees who have not received their booster shot after becoming eligible must begin weekly testing by January 7, 2022. No employee, except for those with a medical or religious exemption can opt out of being vaccinated and boosted according to the public health order from CDPH.

Johnson and Johnson Vaccination

Employees who took the Johnson and Johnson Vaccination must receive a booster shot within two months of receiving that vaccination or by February 1, 2022. If an employee has not received this booster shot by this time they must test weekly until the March 1, 2022. If the employee has not received their booster by March 1, 2022, VMRC is not permitted to include this employee on their payroll, and they will be placed on unpaid leave until they have completed the booster requirement or until their position is filled. Being on unpaid leave provides the employee an expedited re-entry to VMRC employment at the regional center’s discretion.

Pfizer and Moderna Vaccination

Employees who took the Pfizer and or Moderna Vaccination must receive a booster shot within six months of receiving that vaccination or by March 1, 2022, or within 15 days of becoming eligible for a booster if they are not eligible as of March 1, 2022. If the employee has not received their booster by March 1, 2022, VMRC is not permitted to include this employee on their payroll, and they will be placed on unpaid leave until they have completed the booster requirement or until their position is filled. Being on unpaid leave provides the employee an expedited re-entry to VMRC employment at the regional center’s discretion.

Exemptions.

Workers may be exempt from the vaccination requirements only upon providing VMRC a declination form, signed by the individual stating either of the following: (1) the worker is declining vaccination based on Religious Beliefs, or (2) the worker is excused from receiving any COVID-19 vaccine due to Qualifying Medical Reasons.

Additional Documentation for Medical Exemption

To be eligible for a Qualified Medical Reasons exemption the worker must also provide

VMRC a written statement signed by a physician, nurse practitioner, or other licensed medical professional practicing under the license of a physician stating that the individual qualifies for the exemption (but the statement should not describe the underlying medical condition or disability) and indicating the probable duration of the worker's inability to receive the vaccine (or if the duration is unknown or permanent, so indicate).

Additional Requirements for Exempt Workers

If VMRC deems a worker to have met the requirements of a medical or religious exemption, the unvaccinated worker must test for COVID-19 at least once a week (see the VMRC Testing Policy).

Procedure

1. Employees must provide proof of vaccination as soon as possible, and no later than November 30, 2021. Employees must provide proof of booster vaccination by March 1, 2022, if eligible. If not eligible, proof of booster must be provided within 15 days of becoming booster eligible. If, needed, staff may make their appointment for the booster vaccination during work hours. Side effects from the booster may warrant the use of sick time, but if you do not have enough sick time, please contact Human Resources for other options. Proof of vaccination and booster must include the worker's full name, date of birth, vaccine manufacturer, and date of vaccine administration for first dose, and second dose, if applicable, and booster.
2. Proof of vaccination and booster can be shown by:
 - a) COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card (issued by the Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control & Prevention or WHO Yellow Card) which includes name of person vaccinated, type of vaccine provided, and date doses administered); OR
 - b) A photo of a vaccination card as a separate document; OR
 - c) A photo of the client's vaccine card stored on a phone or electronic device, OR
 - d) Documentation of vaccination from a healthcare provider; OR
 - e) Digital record that includes a QR code that when scanned by a SMART Health Card reader displays to the reader client name, date of birth, vaccine dates and vaccine type, OR
 - f) Documentation of vaccination from other contracted employers who follow these vaccination records guidelines and standards.
3. Workers who are not fully vaccinated, or for whom vaccine status is unknown or documentation is not provided, will be considered unvaccinated and those without proof of booster will be considered unboosted.
4. All Declination forms on the grounds of a religious belief or qualifying medical reason must be submitted as soon as possible, and no later than March 1, 2022.
5. Failure to timely submit proof of vaccination, declination form, booster, or supporting documentation, will result in disciplinary action including being placed on unpaid leave (employees have no access to paid time off when on Unpaid Leave – see employee , up to termination.
6. VMRC will hire a contractor to do testing for unvaccinated employees and those eligible for boosters who are unboosted (see VMRC Testing Policy).