

**Baptist Health is committed to protecting the health and wellbeing of our patients and team members. We also are committed to being compliant with the requirements of regulatory agencies that govern our facilities, including the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) emergency standards and rules.**

## **1. WHY AM I REQUIRED TO GET A COVID-19 VACCINE?**

CMS issued an Emergency Regulation requiring COVID-19 vaccination for all health care workers at facilities like those operated by Baptist Health.

## **2. WHICH STAFF ARE COVERED UNDER THIS REQUIREMENT?**

This vaccination requirement applies to all staff working at a facility that participates in the Medicare and Medicaid programs, regardless of clinical responsibility or patient contact. Baptist Health does participate in these programs; therefore the mandate applies to us. This includes all current staff, as well as any new staff who provide any care, treatment, or other services for the facility and/or its patients. This includes facility employees, licensed practitioners, students, trainees, and volunteers. This also includes individuals who provide care, treatment or services for the facilities and/or its patients under contract or other arrangement with Baptist Health.

## **3. DOES THIS REQUIREMENT APPLY TO TEAM MEMBERS WHO ARE FULLY REMOTE WORKERS?**

No. Individuals who provide services 100 percent remotely, who never come into the facility, and have no direct contact with patients and other staff, such as fully remote telehealth or administrative services, are not subject to the vaccination requirements outlined in this regulation.

## **4. HOW QUICKLY MUST I RECEIVE THE COVID-19 VACCINE?**

In order to be in compliance with these CMS requirements, by February 14, 2022, all healthcare workers must receive at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine or request a religious or medical exemption.

The regulation requires that all team members are fully vaccinated by March 15, 2022.

## **5. HOW DOES CMS DEFINE FULLY VACCINATED FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS REQUIREMENT?**

The completion of a primary vaccination series for COVID-19 is defined by CMS as:

- A single dose vaccine - Janssen (Johnson and Johnson) COVID-19 Vaccine
- Two doses of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine
- Two doses of Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine

## **6. DOES BEING “FULLY VACCINATED” REQUIRE ADDITIONAL DOSES OR BOOSTERS?**

At this time, the regulation defines fully vaccinated as above, and does not require additional or booster doses.

## **7. WHERE DO I GET THE COVID-19 VACCINE?**

COVID-19 vaccine appointments are available by clicking on the Quick Link on the bottom right of the Employee Health Engage page. This link will connect you to a page displaying options to choose appointments at BMCS, BMCE and PBH. If you would like to receive the vaccine at Montgomery Cancer Center, please contact one of the nurse managers there for an appointment.

## **8. WHAT IF I GET THE COVID-19 VACCINE FROM ANOTHER SOURCE (E.g. WALGREENS)?**

You will need to provide documentation to [immunizations@baptistfirst.org](mailto:immunizations@baptistfirst.org) or directly to any of the Employee Health offices by February 14, 2022. The written documentation should include:

- A copy of documentation, such as physician note/immunization record;
- Date of immunization;
- Identification of type vaccine administered;
- Vaccine manufacturer and lot number; and
- Which arm the vaccine was administered in.

## **9. IS THERE PROVISION FOR TEAM MEMBERS FOR WHOM A VACCINATION SHOULD BE DELAYED? (E.G. POSITIVE COVID AND RECEIVED MONOCLONAL ANTIBODY THERAPY)**

Possibly. If your specific medical circumstance meets criteria for medical exemption and you successfully request and are granted a medical exemption.

## **10. I TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19 AND HAVE RECOVERED, DOES THE REGULATION INCLUDE EXEMPTIONS FOR TEAM MEMBERS THAT SHOW THEY HAVE COVID-19 ANTIBODIES?**

Possibly. If your specific medical circumstance meets criteria for medical exemption and you successfully request and are granted a medical exemption.

## **11. ARE THERE EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY?**

Yes. The regulation allows that exemptions could be appropriate in certain limited circumstances. Baptist Health has created and distributed a comprehensive vaccine policy as well as a separate instruction document for requesting a religious or medical exemption.

## **12. IF MY EXEMPTION IS APPROVED, WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?**

You will be required to wear a surgical/procedure mask at all times while at work.

**13. WHAT IF I CHOOSE NOT TO BE COMPLIANT WITH THE MANDATORY COVID-19 VACCINE POLICY?**

These new federal requirements restrict options for compliance to what is outlined in the accompanying Baptist Health policy. If you choose not to either: (1) verify that you have received the COVID-19 vaccine; (2) receive at least one of the primary doses of the two dose vaccines or the single dose vaccine; or (3) are not actively pursuing a medical or religious exemption, you will be subject to corrective action up to and including termination of employment.

**14. WHERE CAN I FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT THESE NEW FEDERAL CMS REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO MANDATORY COVID VACCINATIONS?**

[CMS.GOV](https://www.cms.gov)

**15. HOW DO I SUBMIT PROOF OF VACCINATION?**

Proof of vaccination should be submitted via [immunizations@baptistfirst.org](mailto:immunizations@baptistfirst.org).

**16. WHAT IS CONSIDERED “REMOTE” WORK? DO I NEED TO SUBMIT ANYTHING TO BE NOTED AS A REMOTE WORKER?**

The remote worker exemption is very limited. In the work that we do, there will be very few situations where a team member is considered “remote” for compliance with this policy. While some team members may not work in traditional settings; there is a high likelihood that team members are reasonably expected to report to a facility, clinic, office, or other location. To be considered “remote” for this policy, a team member must be 100% remote with no likelihood of interacting with patients or other team members in-person. Further, there is not a form for remote workers to submit. Questions should be directed to your immediate leader.

**17. ARE TENANTS OF BAPTIST HEALTH BUILDINGS SUBJECT TO THIS FEDERAL MANDATE?**

If there is reasonable expectation for the tenants of office or clinic space to interact with our patients or team members, then they are required to comply with the federal mandate.

**18. WHAT HAPPENS ON FEBRUARY 14, 2022 IF I HAVE NOT TAKEN THE FIRST DOSE IN A TWO DOSE VACCINE SERIES, A SINGLE DOSE VACCINE, OR AM NOT ACTIVELY PURSUING A MEDICAL OR RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION (submitted the exemption and are in the consideration process)?**

Team members whom are considered non-compliant on February 14, 2022 will be removed from the schedule via a suspension, until compliant or separated. All others required to comply with this mandate, who are not considered compliant as of February 14, 2022 will not be able to perform services

at a Baptist Health facility, until compliant per the mandate deadlines.

**19. CAN I PLAN TO TAKE WEEKLY TESTS RATHER THAN GET THE VACCINE?**

No. Testing is not an alternative option in the CMS vaccine mandate requirements.