Required COVID-19 Vaccination for Team Members

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Frequently Asked Questions

Is it safe to receive the seasonal flu and COVID-19 vaccine at the same time?
Yes, you can receive both vaccines at the same time. Seasonal flu vaccinations will begin the second week in September. However, COVID-19 vaccine appointments are available this month; there is no reason to delay your COVID-19 vaccine.

Who is required to get the COVID-19 vaccination?
All UVA Health team members are required to be vaccinated. Vaccine exemptions will only be allowed for specific medical conditions and sincerely held religious beliefs and a specific application must be submitted for consideration/approval.

Will I lose my job if I don't have my second dose of a two-dose vaccine or my single shot of Johnson & Johnson by the required deadline?
Team members who have not been granted an exemption and who do not meet the vaccination requirements by November 1 will be subject to disciplinary action. Please review the helpful calendar below:

[9/13]	Submit a request for medical/religious exemption
[9/20]	Deadline for first dose of Moderna vaccine
[9/27]	Deadline for first dose of Pfizer vaccine
[10/18]	Deadline to receive final dose of Moderna or Pfizer vaccine series, single dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccine or have an approved exemption
[11/1]	Begin disciplinary process for unvaccinated team members without exemption up to and including termination.

Why is UVA Health requiring COVID-19 vaccination now?
We have been consulting with our own infectious disease experts and studying recommendations from major public health and professional organizations — including the American Medical Association, the American Hospital Association, the American Nurses Association and many others — regarding the requirement of workers to get vaccinated. Additionally, we are monitoring the highly transmissible delta variant and the surge in COVID-19 cases among unvaccinated people across the country — including in our area. Based on these data, UVA Health will now require all team members to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as a condition of employment.

Why can't I just continue to be tested on a weekly basis?
UVA Health leadership has been monitoring the current COVID -19 situation very carefully. Specifically, we are monitoring the highly transmissible delta variant and the surge in COVID-19 cases among unvaccinated people across the country — including in our area. Based on these data, UVA Health will now require all team members to be fully vaccinated against

COVID-19 as a condition of employment as a way to provide the most safe environment for our patients and team members.

If I get vaccinated, will I need to continue to be tested weekly?
Yes. Weekly COVID-19 testing is required until you are fully vaccinated (14 days after you receive your second dose of Moderna or Pfizer vaccines or the single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine).

Why is UVA Health making this vaccine a requirement if the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) hasn't approved the COVID-19 vaccine yet?
The FDA approved the current COVID-19 vaccines for emergency use during the pandemic after careful review and analysis. Subsequently, the FDA provided full approval of the Pfizer vaccine on August 23, 2021 Scientific study before and after Emergency Use Authorization has shown that the vaccines are safe and effective. Based on these studies and ongoing monitoring, the benefits of the vaccines outweigh risks associated with the COVID-19 vaccines.

What is the required timeframe for getting my COVID-19 vaccine?
All team members must be vaccinated for at least 14 full days as of November 1. Accordingly, a dosing timetable has been created to help team members understand the related vaccination dosage dates for each of the Moderna, Pfizer and J&J vaccines in order to meet the November 1 vaccination deadline. Please review the helpful calendar below:

[9/13]	Submit a request for medical/religious exemption
[9/20]	Deadline for first dose of Moderna vaccine
[9/27]	Deadline for first dose of Pfizer vaccine
[10/18]	Deadline to receive final dose of Moderna or Pfizer vaccine series, single dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccine or have an approved exemption
[11/1]	Begin disciplinary process for unvaccinated team members without exemption up to and including termination.

How do I get vaccinated?
Team members can get vaccinated at any COVID-19 vaccination site that is most convenient. Anyone who was previously infected with COVID-19 is encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as they are recovered from clinical illness. If an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19 prior to required vaccination, they may be vaccinated 14 days after the start of illness if the signs and symptoms have fully resolved. If they are not sure if the signs and symptoms have resolved at that time or if they are immunocompromised, they should email covidvax@hscmail.mcc.virginia.edu for guidance.

Team members can schedule appointments at a UVA Health vaccination site through VaxTrax. Note: Proof of vaccinations administered at UVA Health sites will automatically be available to Employee Health; team members who get vaccinated at other sites must follow the steps for submitting proof of vaccination described below.

How do I provide proof of my vaccination if I was not vaccinated at a UVA Health vaccination site?

Team members who did not schedule vaccinations through VaxTrax should send a scanned image or photo of immunization records, such as a CDC card or official medical record, along with their UVA computing ID to covidvax@hscmail.mcc.virginia.edu by October 18, 2021. Please see complete schedule of related vaccination dates for reference. Employee Health will use this information to validate and update team members' records (VaxTrax data will be available to managers). Any other forms of documentation will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Do I need to submit proof of vaccination if I was vaccinated at a UVA Health vaccination site?

If you were vaccinated at a UVA Health vaccination site, you do not have to submit proof of vaccination. The information is already on file in our VaxTrax system.

Do I have to be fully vaccinated by November 1, 2021?

Yes. In order to be considered fully vaccinated by November 1st, all team members must be vaccinated for at least 14 full days as of November 1st in order to have the appropriate COVID-19 infection antibodies. Accordingly, a dosing timetable has been created to help team members understand the related vaccination dosage dates for each of the Moderna, Pfizer and J&J vaccines in order to meet the November 1st vaccination deadline. Please review the helpful calendar below:

[9/13]	Submit a request for medical/religious exemption
[9/20]	Deadline for first dose of Moderna vaccine
[9/27]	Deadline for first dose of Pfizer vaccine
[10/18]	Deadline to receive final dose of Moderna or Pfizer vaccine series, single dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccine or have an approved exemption
[11/1]	Begin disciplinary process for unvaccinated team members without exemption up to and including termination.

I currently work from home. Does this apply to me?

Yes. If your job-related activities require you to be present in a Health System Facility at any time in a given calendar year, you are considered a Tier 1 Team Member under OCH-002 and you must comply with the vaccine requirement. If your job responsibilities do not require you to be present in a Health System Facility at any time in a given calendar year,

then you may be considered "Tier 2" under OCH-002, and vaccination requirements would not apply to you (see also HSG-014 Telework).

I don't work directly with patients, why do I need to get the vaccine?
Getting the vaccine protects you, our patients, your family, other team members and our community. Given the highly transmissible delta variant and the surge in COVID-19 cases among unvaccinated people across the country — including in our area — UVA Health will now require all team members to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as a condition of employment as a way to provide the most safe environment for our patients and team members.

Are volunteers and contractors included in the requirement?
Yes, volunteers and contractors are included in the requirement.

Will students be vaccinated so they can continue to work in our facilities?
Yes. The University of Virginia announced its mandatory vaccine requirement for students on May 20th (LINK: UVA to Require Vaccination for Students as In-Person Operations Resume in Fall | UVA Today (virginia.edu). In addition, students on campus who are not an enrolled student at UVA, but rather on campus through another program, are subject to the same mandatory vaccine requirement. Any student not vaccinated will not be permitted to continue their student program at UVA Health.

Are vendors required to have the vaccine?
Yes. Any vendor conducting business onsite at UVA Health and registered in RepTrax is required to be vaccinated by November 1, 2021.

I have had COVID-19. Do I need to get vaccinated?
Yes. Anyone who was previously infected with COVID-19 is encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as they are recovered from clinical illness. If an employee is diagnosed with COVID-19 prior to required vaccination, they may be vaccinated 14 days after the start of illness if the signs and symptoms have fully resolved. If they are not sure if the signs and symptoms have resolved at that time or if they are immunocompromised, they should email covidvax@hscmail.mcc.virginia.edu.

Prior COVID-19 illness does not qualify for a medical exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine requirement. Team members who received monoclonal antibody treatment for COVID-19 will be allowed to defer vaccination for 3 months from the last date of their treatment with monoclonal antibody product. Team members must be vaccinated at the conclusion of that 3-month period.

Can I submit a request for an exemption from the COVID-1 9 vaccination requirement?
Yes, you may submit a request for a medical or religious exemption. Requested exemptions will be evaluated by a multidisciplinary team at UVA Health. If you are requesting an exemption, follow the steps/complete the forms through VaxTrax. Medical and religious exemptions are not available for volunteers and non-UVA enrolled students.

Medical and religious accommodations are subject to review and approval. Each exemption request will be considered on an individualized basis. With very few exceptions, medical conditions are generally not recognized contraindications to COVID-19 vaccination and should not prevent team members from getting the vaccine. UVA Health encourages team members to consult with their healthcare provider with questions about the COVID-19 vaccine.

I have a medical flu shot exemption. Can I use that for the COVID-19 vaccine exemption?
No. You must submit a new exemption request for the COVID-19 vaccine.

I have a religious flu shot exemption. Do I need to apply for another exemption for the COVID-19 vaccine?
No. A separate application for a COVID-19 exemption does not need to be submitted if a team member has an approved flu vaccine exemption on file with Employee Health.

Can I request a medical exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine requirement based on the medical condition of another member of my household?
The medical conditions of other individuals in a team member's household do not qualify the team member for exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine requirement.

Can a team member who is pregnant defer receiving the COVID-19 vaccine until after their pregnancy?
Team members who are pregnant do not qualify for a deferral from the COVID-19 vaccine requirement and therefore must submit proof of vaccination.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the Society for Maternal Fetal Medicine recommend the vaccine for pregnant women. UVA Health encourages all pregnant team members to consult with their obstetrician, midwife, or other health care provider with questions about the COVID-19 vaccine.

Can a team member who is breastfeeding defer receiving the COVID-19 vaccine while they are breastfeeding?
Team members who are breastfeeding do not qualify for a deferral from the COVID-19 vaccine requirement and therefore must submit proof of vaccination. There is no evidence that any COVID-19 vaccine enters breastmilk or has any impact on a breastfeeding infant.

UVA Health encourages team members who are breastfeeding to consult with their child's pediatrician or other health care provider with questions about the COVID-19 vaccine.

Can team members who are planning to become pregnant defer receiving the COVID-19 vaccine while they are trying to conceive?
Anticipated pregnancy does not qualify for a medical exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine requirement and therefore team members must submit proof of vaccination by November 1, 2021. The American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) recommends COVID-19 vaccination for women who are seeking to become pregnant, or during early pregnancy, as the best way to reduce maternal and fetal complications. UVA Health encourages team members who anticipate becoming pregnant to consult with their OB, fertility specialist, or other health care provider with questions about the COVID-19 vaccine.

How will UVA Health evaluate medical exemption requests based on infertility treatment?
Each medical accommodation request will be considered on an individualized basis. The American Society for Reproductive Medicine (ASRM) recommends COVID-19 vaccination for women who are seeking to become pregnant, or during early pregnancy, as the best way to reduce maternal and fetal complications. UVA Health encourages team members who anticipate becoming pregnant or who are undergoing infertility treatments to consult with their reproductive specialist other healthcare provider with questions about the COVID-19 vaccine.

How will UVA Health evaluate medical exemption requests based on a severe or immediate allergic reaction to a previous dose of the COVID-19 vaccine?
Each medical accommodation request will be considered on an individualized basis based on CDC contraindications for COVID-19 vaccination.

How will UVA Health evaluate medical exemption requests on the basis of food or other allergies?
Each medical accommodation request will be considered on an individualized basis based on CDC contraindications for COVID-19 vaccination.

How will UVA Health evaluate medical accommodation requests based on history of blood clots/bleeding disorders, or of Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS)?
Each medical accommodation request will be considered on an individualized basis based on CDC contraindications for COVID-19 vaccination.

How will I know if my request for exemption was granted or not?
You will be notified via email.

My request for an exemption was denied. Do I still have to get the COVID-19 vaccine?
Yes. You must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by the November 1st**, 2021,** deadline if you do not have an exemption. In order to be considered fully vaccinated by November 1st, all team members must be vaccinated for at least 14 full days as of November 1st in order to be fully immunized against COVID-19 infection. Accordingly, a dosing timetable has been created to help team members understand the related vaccination dosage dates for each of the Moderna, Pfizer and J&J vaccines in order to meet the November 1st vaccination deadline. Please review the helpful calendar below:

[9/13] Submit a request for medical/religious exemption
[9/20] Deadline for first dose of Moderna vaccine
[9/27] Deadline for first dose of Pfizer vaccine
[10/18] Deadline to receive final dose of Moderna or Pfizer vaccine series, single dose of Johnson & Johnson vaccine or have an approved exemption
[11/1] Begin disciplinary process for unvaccinated team members without exemption up to and including termination.

Can I request an exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine requirement if I am concerned about the safety of the COVID-19 vaccine or generally disagree with UVA Health's COVID-19 vaccine requirement?
No. Team member concern about the safety of the COVID-19 vaccine or disagreement with the COVID-19 vaccine requirement do not qualify for an exemption.

Can contract team members and students get the COVID-19 vaccine at UVA Health?
We will provide the COVID-19 vaccine to contracted team members as long as vaccine is available to us. At this time, students will need to be vaccinated through community-based clinics or their healthcare providers. Visit Vaccinate.Virginia.gov to find a location near you.

How will new team members get a COVID-19 vaccine?
New team members can submit proof of vaccination, receive their vaccine or request an exemption when they report to Employee Health for the new team member health screening.

Will we be required to get COVID-19 vaccine boosters?
Patients and team members with weakened immune systems can now schedule appointments to receive their third dose of either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine at two UVA Health facilities in Charlottesville. At this time, an additional dose for those who received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine has not been authorized. (For details, read the guidance from the CDC here.)

Although no one is required to provide proof of their third-dose eligibility, everyone must complete an attestation form during the scheduling process to confirm they belong in one of the immunocompromised categories identified by the CDC.

If you are considering getting an additional dose, it is important to know the following:

- You must get the same vaccine that you previously received
- You should wait at least four weeks (28 days) between your second and third shot.
- **Details for Team Members:**
    - Appointments can be scheduled in VaxTrax or by calling 434.297.4829.
    - Employee Health is offering Moderna third-dose vaccinations, and appointments are available on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 8-10 a.m.
    - Third doses of the Pfizer vaccine are being offered to team members at the COVID Clinic in the West Complex and at the UVA Outpatient Pharmacy at the Education Resource Center on Lee Street.
    - If you have questions or concerns, please talk with your provider before scheduling your appointment.

If you have questions or concerns, please talk with your provider before scheduling your appointment.

Will we still be required to wear masks in patient-care areas?
UVA Health expects all team members to follow universal masking guidelines. Additionally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) requires team members, medical staff, patients, families and visitors to mask in any patient-care area within a healthcare facility. This includes any area open to the public and any areas with patient or visitor traffic.

Once vaccinated, will we still be required to wear masks in non-patient care areas?
UVA Health is currently under universal masking guidelines. This means that everyone two years old and older, including team members, patients, family members, and other visitors, must be masked at all times when in a UVA Health facility or building (unless alone in a private office/space).

I lost my COVID-19 vaccination card. How do I get a new one?
Vaccinated team members who have lost their CDC card should contact their vaccination site for a replacement. Team members who received their COVID vaccination at UVA Health can download a replacement card here. The Virginia Department of Health can also email a copy of your immunization record after verifying your information over the phone. Click here to fill out the preliminary request form.

How can I learn more about the different COVID-19 vaccines?
The CDC website is a great resource to learn more about the different COVID-19 vaccines that are currently available.

I have additional questions that weren't answered in this document. Who should I ask?
If you have additional questions, please talk with your manager or email CovidVax@hscmail.mcc.virginia.edu.