COVID-19 Vaccines & Employers
Guidance and resources for community-based employers in Westchester

As many New Yorkers return to their offices and more community services transition from remote to in-person, employers play a key role in encouraging COVID-19 vaccination and achieving vaccine equity. This fact sheet offers the latest in local, state, and federal guidance and key resources to assist employers in ensuring a safe and equitable workspace.

WHAT STEPS CAN I TAKE TO ENCOURAGE VACCINATION AMONG MY STAFF?

- Post informational flyers about vaccines in the workplace. The CDC has posters for different audiences, many of which are in multiple languages.
- Advertise walk-up vaccination sites and other sites close to the office.
  - Westchester has walk-in vaccine clinics for people ages 12 and up.
- For in-home vaccination in Westchester County, email jswl@westchestergov.com or aqpij@westchestergov.com or call 914-813-6300.
- Offer resources to get to and from vaccine appointments.
  - United Way of Westchester and Putnam is offering free Lyft rides to vaccine appointments (up to $25 each direction) for non-Medicaid recipients.
  - Medicaid recipients can utilize medical transportation for vaccine appointments.
- Initiate partnerships with local pharmacists or providers to provide vaccine information sessions and onsite vaccination events at the workplace.
- Have 1-1 conversations with unvaccinated staff. The Institute for Healthcare Improvement’s Conversation Guide has tips for effective conversations.
- Offer vaccine incentives to your employees.
  - Mount Vernon Neighborhood Health Center is offering $100 incentives for COVID-19 vaccinations.
- Remind employees about their right to paid leave for getting vaccinated.
- Provide paid sick leave for recovery time.
- Remind staff that COVID-19 vaccines are available to everyone for free, regardless of immigration statuses and insurance.
  - There are many acceptable forms of proof of age including a valid foreign passport or permanent resident card.
- Consider requiring staff to be vaccinated or submit weekly COVID-19 tests.
  - Your organization may be required to mandate the vaccine under new state and federal rules.
IS MY ORGANIZATION REQUIRED TO MANDATE THE COVID-19 VACCINE?

- By January 4, any organization that has 100 or more employees must require personnel to be fully vaccinated and follow the federal vaccine requirements issued by OSHA, pending a federal court ruling. Unvaccinated employees may provide weekly negative tests.
- Hospitals, nursing homes, diagnostic & treatment centers, home care programs under Article 36, hospices, and adult care facilities regulated by the NYS Department of Health must require personnel to be fully vaccinated.
- Psychiatric hospitals licensed by NYS OMH and specialty hospitals regulated by NYS OPWDD must require staff to be fully vaccinated by December 10.
- NYS health care workers are no longer entitled to religious exemptions for COVID-19 vaccine requirements.
- By January 4, FQHC’s and any organization receiving federal or Medicaid/Medicare funding must require personnel to be fully vaccinated according to federal vaccine requirements issued by CMS.

HOW CAN I REPLICATE WHAT OTHER EMPLOYERS ARE DOING?

- The Health Action Alliance has a customizable COVID-19 Vaccination Policy template and sample request forms for religious and medical exemptions.
- Employers can use this sample COVID-19 Safety Policy created by LiveOn NY, Lawyers Alliance of New York, and Pro Bono Employment Council. Some NYC-specific language in this sample will need to be adapted to fit your organization’s location.
- The Health Action Alliance has a running list of U.S. companies – ranging from large corporations to smaller nonprofit organizations – with COVID-19 vaccination requirements. The list includes basic information about each company’s requirements with a link to learn more about organizational policies.

ARE THERE RESOURCES TO HELP WITH IMPLEMENTATION?

- Health Action Alliance’s COVID-19 Employer Policies: A Decision Tool for Employers guide offers the latest health, legal, and other considerations to guide business planning and decision-making.
  - OSHA has additional guidance on mitigating and preventing the spread of COVID-19 in the workplace.
- The Mt. Sinai Selikoff Centers for Occupational Health provides tailored support to organizations on COVID-19 health and safety in the workplace. Their location in Yonkers serves Westchester County.
- Some applications that are being used to help with compliance tracking include Kokomo, JotForm, HIPAA forms, and MyMedBot.
- FFMA Public Assistance Grants may provide funding to eligible applicants for costs related to emergency protective measures conducted due to COVID-19, including costs for COVID-19 testing.
WHAT TYPES OF DOCUMENTATION CAN BE USED FOR PROOF OF VACCINATION?

- CDC Vaccination Card including a photo or copy of the card.
- The Excelsior Pass App
  - The Excelsior Pass Scanner App can be used by employers to verify proof of vaccination records and negative test results.

RESOURCES FOR EMPLOYEES WITH SUSPECTED OR CONFIRMED COVID-19

- The Westchester County COVID-19 Dashboard includes a test site finder. A Mobile friendly version is also available.
- Remind employees about quarantine and isolation guidelines, which differ based on vaccination status.
- Provide information to employees about Monoclonal Antibody Treatment (mAb) for COVID-19.
  - The FDA has given emergency use authorization for the use of Monoclonal Antibodies to treat non-hospitalized patients with mild or moderate COVID-19 meeting certain high-risk criteria to prevent the progression of COVID-19 to more severe diseases. Treatment is administered intravenously usually within 10 days of the onset of symptoms.
  - Westchester Medical Center is providing mAb treatment with provider referrals.
    - Providers seeking to refer a patient can either call 914–202–4530 or complete this online request form.
  - St. John’s Riverside Hospital, Andrus Pavilion is providing mAb treatment on-site with provider referrals.
    - Patients should consult with their primary care provider or call 914–964–4429 for a virtual consultation.
    - Providers seeking to refer a patient can call 914–964–4497.
  - Northern Westchester Hospital Infusion Center is providing mAb treatment with proof of a positive COVID-19 test.
    - Patient self-referrals are accepted, contact 1–833–776–6784.
    - Providers seeking to refer a patient can fill out this form.
  - Other mAb sites can be found here.

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