

COVID-19 Vaccine Requirement | FAQ--St. Alexius Health

Please Note: All references to “vaccine” or “vaccination” in this document refer to the COVID-19 vaccine unless otherwise noted.

For additional information or questions not noted here, [read the HR FAQ](#) or contact CSH-COVID19@commonspirit.org.

1. Are COVID-19 vaccines required for CommonSpirit employees?

CommonSpirit Health will make the COVID-19 vaccine a condition of employment for all employees, including employees who work at non-care sites, those who do not provide direct patient care, and those who work remotely. This requirement also includes all physicians, Advanced Practice Providers, volunteers and others caring for our patients within our facilities. While the implementation date of this vaccination requirement may vary by region due to local and state regulations and conditions, verification of full vaccination is required by November 1, 2021. Medical and religious exemptions are available to those who wish to apply for one. You can request an exemption through the COVID Vaccine status survey. You must complete the required survey as soon as possible.

2. What does “fully vaccinated” mean?

According to the CDC, a person is “fully vaccinated” two weeks after receiving all necessary doses of the COVID-19 vaccine. CommonSpirit employees must provide proof of full vaccination by Nov. 1 and therefore must have received all doses of the vaccine by Oct. 18.

3. Will there be exceptions for medical or religious reasons?

Medical and religious exemptions are available to those who wish to apply for one. You can request an exemption through the COVID Vaccine status survey. You must complete the required survey as soon as possible.

4. How can I request a medical or religious exemption?

You may request a medical or religious exemption by completing the vaccine status survey. You should have received an email with a link to the survey on or around Aug. 16. You can also find the survey link on the homepage on InsideSTA under “News” on the left hand side of the page. It’s the link that is titled, “ACTION REQUIRED: Complete the enhanced COVID-19 Vaccination Status Survey.” You are encouraged to complete the required survey as soon as possible.

5. How do I get a COVID-19 vaccine?

You can schedule an appointment to receive your COVID-19 vaccination at one of our Employee Vaccination Clinics held in the Boniface Auditorium. Below are links to schedule an appointment to receive your COVID-19 vaccination at one of our Employee Vaccination Clinics. When making an appointment, the system will ask you for your insurance type, this is a federal requirement. You will not be asked for your insurance plan information as the vaccination is provided through Employee Health.

We will be offering the Pfizer vaccine at all of our Employee Vaccination Clinics. You must use Google Chrome to access links below or you will not be able to complete the registration.

1st dose clinics

August 24, 0700-1700

https://www.ndvax.org//appointment/en/clinic/private_registration/zi1Nfq9vk5AG2JofNTQh8d2Hi2VWtGAT

August 25, 0700-1700

https://www.ndvax.org//appointment/en/clinic/private_registration/ETNppwFs1iWtMK2QwdZUJngtgBTBD5XG

August 26, 0700-1700

https://www.ndvax.org//appointment/en/clinic/private_registration/kejzE2CdrtiBqUyZD3DJPMGfQzRoLRbY

August 27, 0700-1400

https://www.ndvax.org//appointment/en/clinic/private_registration/dm7DRN8HyFRxp6RANRoRJmX6wm2QPxB

August 30, 0700-1700

https://www.ndvax.org//appointment/en/clinic/private_registration/yC3Dcc6uxjf9XJhn1v4GJhdbLXhGGUok

September 1, 0700-1700

https://www.ndvax.org//appointment/en/clinic/private_registration/ajMdwzV4YoVkbT6CPV42W6cLsiaN4mkr

September 2, 0700-1700

https://www.ndvax.org//appointment/en/clinic/private_registration/KGW7xmJFcrNNtHi2dyiq1Ko3vGJ2TvJM

Notes: Masks are required. An email address is required for reminder notifications. Be prepared to stay in the immediate area for 15 minutes after vaccination. Total estimated time will be approximately 25 minutes.

If you would like the Moderna vaccine please schedule an appointment with any of the following (you will need to provide a copy of your vaccination card to Employee Health after completion):

- Mandan Pharmacy or Community Pharmacy: Call 701.530.6950

6. Why are COVID-19 vaccines required?

The primary reason for requiring the COVID-19 vaccine is safety. The highly infectious Delta variant now accounts for the vast majority of all COVID-19 cases in the U.S., and while universal masking in high-risk settings such as hospitals and care environments offers strong protection against infection and transmission, vaccination is the most effective and successful way to protect against COVID-19 and slow the spread.

7. **Are other health systems requiring the vaccine for employees?**

So far, [hundreds of other hospitals and health systems](#) across the country have made the decision to require COVID-19 vaccination for their employees, and more are adopting similar policies every day. Vaccination is the most effective and successful way to protect against COVID-19 and slow the spread.

8. **What if my state or region has a different requirement?**

CommonSpirit Health complies with all applicable state and local laws or regulations, and the implementation date of this vaccination requirement may vary by region due to local and state regulations and conditions. If your state or region has issued a vaccine requirement for health care workers that is different from our policy or guideline, we will comply with the local requirement.

9. **What happens if I do not get vaccinated by November 1?**

CommonSpirit employees are required to comply with all conditions of employment. Failure to do so may subject the employee to appropriate disciplinary action, as allowed by law or other policy. Additional information about the COVID-19 vaccine requirement is available in the [HR FAQ](#).

10. **Is there a requirement on *which* vaccine to get?**

Employees, physicians, Advanced Practice Providers, and volunteers must be fully vaccinated by Nov. 1, 2021 with any available COVID-19 vaccine recognized by the CDC. To be considered fully vaccinated, you must receive your last dose of the vaccine by October 18 -- two weeks before the November 1 deadline.

11. **How soon should the vaccination process be started in order to be fully vaccinated by November 1?**

Employees are encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as possible if they haven't already -- or get their first dose of a two shot series by September 20 at the latest or a single shot series by October 18. To be considered fully vaccinated, you must receive your last dose of the vaccine two weeks before the November 1 deadline, on or before October 18. See question #5 above for St. Alexius vaccine clinic dates and registration.

12. **Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?**

According to the CDC and FDA, the COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective. The vaccines have been tested thoroughly through expansive clinical trials, and are authorized by the FDA. Decades of research have informed vaccine technology. The vaccines are extremely effective at preventing symptomatic disease, serious illness, hospitalization, and death.

13. **Why aren't we waiting to require vaccines until they receive full approval from the FDA?**

On August 23, 2021, the U.S Food and Drug Administration approved the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine. According to the CDC and FDA, the COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective, and tens of millions of doses have been administered with very few serious side effects. The highly infectious Delta variant now accounts for the vast majority of all COVID-19 cases in the U.S., and while universal masking in high-risk settings such as hospitals offers strong protection against infection and transmission, vaccination is the most effective and successful way to protect against COVID-19 and slow the spread.

14. I have already been vaccinated. How do I provide proof of vaccination?

After completing the survey, you will be required to provide proof of your vaccination status as follows:

For all employees at St. Alexius hospital and clinic locations including Garrison and Turtle Lake:

If you were vaccinated (both vaccines) at any one of our employee CHI St. Alexius on-site clinics in Bismarck on the following date you do not need to submit proof of vaccination as we have the necessary information in our database from our clinics.

- ❖ December 15 – December 18, 2020 (first dose)
- ❖ December 21 – December 23, 2020 (first dose)
- ❖ January 5 – January 8, 2021 (second dose)
- ❖ January 11 – January 13, 2021 (second dose)
- ❖ January 19 – January 20, 2021 (second dose)

If you were vaccinated anywhere other than one of these clinics (even if at one of our pharmacy or primary care locations) then you need to provide your vaccination card/information with BOTH vaccines documented (unless J&J, then only proof of one is required) to Lynette Sherman in Employee Health using any one of these methods:

- ❖ Scan and email to Lynette.Sherman@CommonSpirit.org
- ❖ Fax it to Employee Health at 701.530.7695
- ❖ Drop it off in Human Resources during office hours:
 - Monday through Friday, 7:30 – 9:30 a.m. and 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
- ❖ Take it to one of the upcoming St. Alexius Health Bismarck Vaccine Clinics:
 - August 24 – 27 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (2:00 p.m. on Friday)
 - August 30 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
 - September 1 – 2 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Any of the following are acceptable methods of proof of vaccination:

- ❖ COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card (issued by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention or WHO Yellow Card)
- ❖ A photo of a Vaccination Record Card as a separate document
- ❖ A photo of the Vaccination Record Card stored on a phone or electronic device
- ❖ Documentation of a COVID-19 vaccination from a health care provider
- ❖ Digital record that includes a QR code that can be scanned by a SMART Health Card reader
- ❖ Documentation of vaccination from other contracted employers

All employees will need to provide proof of vaccination by Nov. 1, 2021, through this process. Physicians and Advanced Practice Providers who are not employed by CommonSpirit Health will receive information about the process for disclosing their vaccination status. Volunteers will also receive additional information soon.

15. If I am vaccinated do I still need to wear a mask?

Yes. CommonSpirit Health has adopted universal masking at all facilities, regardless of vaccination status. Additionally, strict social distancing and hand hygiene protocols remain in place, as well as health screenings for employees and visitors upon entry to our facilities.

16. Will we ask leaders to comply first with vaccines, and then everyone else?

All CommonSpirit Health employees, physicians, Advanced Practice Providers, and volunteers are required to be vaccinated or have an approved medical or religious exemption by November 1, regardless of role.

17. Are remote workers required to get the vaccine?

Yes, the CommonSpirit Health COVID-19 vaccination requirement applies to remote workers.

18. Are we asking people to self-attest their vaccination status, or show proof?

See question #14 above. All St. Alexius Health employees will need to provide proof of vaccination by Nov. 1, 2021, through the process outlined in question #14 above. Physicians and Advanced Practice Providers who are not employed by CommonSpirit Health will receive information about the process for disclosing their vaccination status. Volunteers will also receive specific instructions.

19. Is the decision to grant an exemption a local or organizational decision?

CommonSpirit Health recognizes that there may be a valid basis to seek a medical or a religious exemption from the vaccine, and we are prepared to assess these types of requests across CommonSpirit care sites. A standardized process is being established to review exemption requests and will be communicated soon.

20. Will physicians need to show proof they are vaccinated, or will they just self-attest?

All CommonSpirit Health employees, physicians, Advanced Practice Providers, and volunteers are required to show proof of vaccination by November 1st; self-attestation is not permitted.

21. What if a patient requests to know the vaccination status of an employee?

CommonSpirit Health will not disclose an employee's private health information to patients. If the employee themselves decides to disclose their status to their patient it is their own independent decision.

22. What if a patient refuses to be cared for by someone who isn't vaccinated?

CommonSpirit Health will not disclose an employee's private health information to patients. We can assure patients that all CommonSpirit Health care sites follow strict protocols for hand hygiene, masking and PPE, according to CDC guidelines. We also conduct a health screening for all employees and visitors upon entry to our facilities.

23. Is the medical / exemption deadline going to be extended past August 23rd?

The previously mentioned August 23 and August 22 dates for exemption requests are no longer in effect. Employees need to complete the survey as soon as possible.

24. Where can I get more information?

For more information, contact your leader, human resources, or visit insidesta. You can also [read the HR FAQ](#) or contact CSH-COVID19@commonspirit.org.