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**UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL**

TITLE:	Influenza Vaccination	REFERENCE: N/A
CATEGORY:	Human Resources	PAGES: 1 of 5 SUPERSEDES: N/A
APPROVER:	Office of Human Resources	REVISED: August 29, 2018

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**PURPOSE**

The University of Miami (“University”) recognizes its ongoing commitment to public and patient safety. In an effort to limit the spread of influenza infection, the University is requiring Influenza Vaccination for all healthcare personnel (HCP), especially those who have ongoing interactions with patients as a function of their clinical or non-clinical job. This policy will help us better serve our community and protect our patients, employees, families, and associates from the unnecessary spread of the influenza virus.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all UHealth System affiliated subsidiaries including, but not limited to, hospitals, ambulatory surgery centers, clinics, outpatient centers, and University of Miami Medical Group (UMMG).

**DEFINITIONS**

“**Business Day**” shall mean the part of a day during which most businesses are operating, usually from 9 am to 5 pm Monday through Friday, and shall not include Saturday, Sunday, a publicly recognized holiday, or a University-recognized holiday.

“**Clinical Setting**” shall mean any section or unit of a building, property, or site that is owned, leased, rented, or operated by the University where care, services to patients, or research occurs; including, but not limited to hospitals, outpatient clinics, student and employee health centers, and pharmacies. These areas are defined by the physical or recognized borders of any inpatient or outpatient areas where patients may be seen, evaluated, or treated. The specific facilities subject to this policy shall be listed in the annual communication issued by the University.

“**Influenza Season**” shall mean an annually recurring time period characterized by the prevalence of outbreaks, which typically occurs during the fall and winter months (i.e., generally

from September to March). However, this definition may be modified in practice based upon guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

**“Employees”** shall mean all regular full-time and part-time workers employed with the University. All classifications including temporary, per diem, and casual workers are included in the definition.

**“Guest”** shall mean an individual or group that is invited to the institution to take part in a function organized by the University or required as part of an accreditation review to access the facilities.

**“Healthcare Personnel”** shall mean an individual in a clinical or non-clinical role who delivers or provides direct health care services or who have the potential to come in contact with patients. The term “healthcare personnel” may include (but is not limited to) physicians, nurses, nursing assistants, students, residents, fellows, therapists, technicians, emergency medical service personnel, dental personnel, pharmacists, laboratory personnel, autopsy personnel, security, volunteers and trainees.

**“Seasonal Influenza Vaccine”** A vaccine for seasonal influenza virus strains offered on an annual basis.

**“Student”** shall mean an individual who is enrolled at the University of Miami and requires access to the clinical setting for an authorized academic purpose, including but not limited to undergraduate students, graduate students, researchers, fellows, residents, students participating in an authorized work-study program, and interns.

**“Vaccination Deadline”** shall be designated with each year’s flu season communication as timing may be subject to modification based on CDC guidelines, pharmacy supplies and other variables.

**“Vendor”** shall mean anyone doing business with the University and requiring access to a clinical setting for a University-related purpose.

**“Work Day”** shall mean the periods of time between the commencement of the employee’s first principal activity and the completion of his last principal activity; are hours during that twenty-four (24) hour period which are included in the computation of hours worked.

**“Work Week”** shall mean a fixed and regularly recurring period of seven (7) consecutive 24-hour periods.

## **POLICY**

It is the policy of the University that all healthcare personnel receive an annual influenza vaccination as a condition of employment with the University or possess an approved medical or religious exemption to access any clinical setting. Applicants for positions in clinical settings who accept an offer of employment during the influenza season (i.e., generally from September to March; however, this definition may be modified in practice based upon guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) must receive an influenza vaccination prior to

commencing work with the University. Said applicants will be given five (5) work days from the date of their acceptance of employment to receive their vaccination or provide proof of vaccination to the Employee Health Office. An applicant who does not comply with this condition of employment shall have their offer rescinded. All others including patients and visitors not covered by this policy are highly recommended to take precautions while visiting any University clinical setting.

UHealth will offer the seasonal influenza vaccine free of charge while supplies last, as part of its annual Employee Health Program. For vaccinations received outside of the University, refer to your benefit plan for coverage options.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **I. VACCINATION REQUIREMENT**

All healthcare personnel shall be required to obtain an annual influenza vaccination or possess an approved medical or religious exemption in order to access any clinical setting and as a condition of their employment.

Any individual covered by this policy who fails to comply with its provisions will be denied access to all clinical settings (except access to the Employee Health Office (“EHO”) for the purpose related to influenza vaccination); and serve up to seven (7) business days of unpaid suspension. Failure to comply with this policy after serving a suspension will result in termination of employment.

### **II. VACCINATION PROCESS**

Prior to the start of influenza season, the University will provide information to employees regarding the requirement for vaccination; dates when the influenza vaccine is available; procedure for receiving vaccination; the approval process for outside vaccinations; and the exemption process. The vaccine will be offered free of charge to University employees at [these sites](#) while supplies last. For vaccinations received outside of the University, please refer to your benefit plan for coverage options.

In all cases, proof of vaccination must be provided to EHO prior to the vaccination deadline in order to comply with this policy. Flu vaccinations obtained outside of UM (CVS, Walgreens, UM and other Personal Healthcare Providers, VA Hospital, JMH, etc.) should include the Flu vaccine Lot number, date the vaccination was given, and the location where the vaccine was obtained.

In the event of an influenza vaccine shortage, EHO will identify and prioritize staff based on risk to patient populations, job function, and risk of exposure.

### **III. EXEMPTIONS**

## A. MEDICAL EXEMPTIONS

Medical exemptions may be granted under certain circumstances. Documentation in support of the medical exemption must be submitted to the Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) at [flu@miami.edu](mailto:flu@miami.edu) for review by no later than the publicized date so that decision can be made in time for compliance. The Office of Environmental Health and Safety shall make a determination within seven (7) business days from receipt of all required documentation to review exemption request. Medical exemptions will generally be granted where an employee has a severe documented (by medical records) adverse reaction to the flu vaccine or its components or has a history of Guillain-Barre syndrome. The employee must have his or her healthcare provider complete the [Influenza Vaccination MEDICAL Exemption Request form](#). The employee is responsible for returning the completed form to the Office of Environmental Health and Safety at [flu@miami.edu](mailto:flu@miami.edu). The Influenza Vaccination MEDICAL Exemption Request form is available at the [Flu Website](#) or by contacting the Office of Environmental Health and Safety by email at [flu@miami.edu](mailto:flu@miami.edu). **Employees who received a permanent medical exemption in previous years do not need to reapply annually.**

**NOTE: An egg allergy is not considered a justification for a medical exemption. Egg free Influenza vaccines will be administered to those employees who have egg allergy.**

Health care personnel who are denied their request for a MEDICAL exemption can appeal in writing to the Office of Environmental Health and Safety at [flu@miami.edu](mailto:flu@miami.edu) within three (3) business days of written denial notification. The appeal will be reviewed by a three-person panel comprised of Associate Vice President for Human Resources - Medical Campus; Dr. Daniel Armstrong of Faculty Affairs; and a UMMG physician.

## B. RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS

If a healthcare personnel is seeking an exemption because it conflicts with sincerely held religious beliefs, he/she must complete and submit a [Request for Religious Exemption](#), to the Office of Workplace Equity and Performance ("WEP") for review. WEP shall make a determination within seven (7) business days from receipt of all required documentation to review exemption request. A healthcare personnel who is denied their request for a religious exemption can appeal in writing to the Assistant Vice President for Workplace Equity & Performance within three (3) business days of written denial notification. The appeal will be reviewed by the Vice President for Human Resources or designee. The letter of appeal should be submitted to [wep@miami.edu](mailto:wep@miami.edu).

## C. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

All employees are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the policies and procedures associated with the vaccination process.

## IV. COMPLIANCE

Any healthcare personnel covered by this policy who fails to comply with its requirements will be denied access to all patient and clinical settings during the annual influenza season. Employees who do not present verifiable proof of vaccination or an exemption prior to the deadline will be placed on an unpaid suspension for up to seven (7) business days. A suspended employee can return to work at any time during the unpaid suspension by presenting proof of vaccination or by

receiving approval of an exemption request as provided for above. Any employee who fails to comply with the policy standard will be terminated from employment by the University and said employee shall be ineligible for rehire. All suspension notices and terminations must be reviewed by Workplace Equity & Performance.

Temporary guests, healthcare personnel hired after the vaccination deadline, and an employee who returns from an extended leave during the vaccination period, will be given one (1) work week in order to allow time for compliance with this policy. Failure to comply will result in denied access to the clinical settings and disciplinary action as described above.