

# 2021–2022 Influenza Season

## Frequently Asked Questions

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Influenza (the flu) can be a serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes even death. Anyone can get very sick from the flu, including people who are otherwise healthy. Requiring an annual flu vaccine demonstrates our commitment to protect the safety and health of our patients, many of whom already have weakened immune systems, colleagues and family members.

## JHM MANDATORY VACCINATION POLICY FOR 2021-22

### Who does the policy apply to?

The mandatory vaccination policy applies to ALL JHM (Johns Hopkins Health System and Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine) faculty, staff, trainees, students, volunteers, and vendors irrespective of current work location. All Johns Hopkins University (JHU) employees, faculty, staff, and students must receive the vaccine if they will be participating in on-campus activities. This requirement represents an effort to protect all Johns Hopkins employees from influenza and is as a condition of employment, appointment to the medical staff or access to patient and clinical care areas.

### When is the compliance deadline for vaccination?



As outlined in Johns Hopkins Mandatory Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Policy [HSE048](#), the deadline is the **first Friday in December**. This season, the deadline is **Dec. 10, 2021**. **\*\*This season, the deadline has been extended from Nov. 19, 2021 to Dec. 10, 2021.**

## GETTING A VACCINATION

### What are my options to get a flu vaccination this year?

There are four options to get a vaccination:

- At one of the on-campus vaccination clinics
- On selected [department clinical units](#)
- Another retail pharmacy offering vaccinations including Walgreens
- Your personal doctor's office

### Walgreens

All Johns Hopkins employees will also be able to get a free vaccination at any Walgreens retail pharmacy location. You will need to present a [voucher](#) and your Johns Hopkins ID.

**\*\*Note: Voucher not compatible with Internet Explorer; please use Chrome, Firefox, or Safari\*\***

### On Campus

The flu vaccination clinics will be held at the following [Johns Hopkins Affiliate Locations](#).

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To help comply with physical distancing guidelines, an **appointment will be required** to get a vaccination at the clinic. An appointment can be made using [MyChart](#) ([See steps to schedule a flu shot appointment](#)). Choose **“Schedule an Appointment”** from the main menu. Then choose the tile labeled

**“Occupational and Student Health”**. If you do not see this tile please call the JHCC at [443-287-8500](tel:443-287-8500) and choose [option 6](#).

After you are vaccinated at the clinic, you will receive a [purple clip](#) as evidence that you’ve received a vaccination.

After **November 5, 2021**, the flu vaccine will be offered at the [Arcade Pharmacy](#) on the East Baltimore campus.

## Clinical Units

Many of the nursing units have a designated flu champion. The flu champions can provide flu vaccines to staff on their unit. Click [here](#) to find out what units have a flu champion.

## Doctor’s office or another location other than a Johns Hopkins medical facility (i.e. drug store)

If you receive the vaccine elsewhere, including a Johns Hopkins Community Physician clinic, please submit your documentation by **Dec. 10th** via the [Vaccine Management System](#). Use this link to submit proof of vaccination for yourself or someone else:



[Vaccine Management System](#)

## What should I wear when I get my flu vaccine?

The flu vaccine is given in your upper arm. Please wear either short sleeves, or sleeves that can easily be pulled up to your shoulder.

## GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

### Will a flu vaccine protect me against COVID-19?

No, getting a flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19. However, getting a flu vaccine this year will be more important than ever. The flu weakens the immune system and the combination of flu with COVID-19 may lead to a more serious illness than either condition alone.

### Why is it important to get a flu vaccine during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Flu vaccination is still the best way to reduce the incidence of Influenza in our community. Reduction of Influenza cases will help to ease the burden on the health care system during a busy respiratory virus season. Additionally, patients may be resistant to seeking health care for mild illnesses due to fear of catching COVID-19. Outcomes of having the flu could potentially be more devastating for those who choose to not seek care when needed.

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## **Is it safe to get the flu vaccine at the same time as the COVID vaccine?**

Yes. When the COVID-19 vaccine was first approved for emergency use authorization (EUA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) had recommended delaying other vaccines for at least 14 days after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. This was done out of an abundance of caution because the vaccine was new. The CDC has since collected more data regarding the COVID-19 vaccine and no longer recommends delaying other vaccines. The CDC states that COVID-19 vaccines may be administered without regard to timing of other vaccines.

## **Is it true that you can get the flu from the flu vaccine?**

No, you cannot get the flu from the flu vaccine. The virus in the vaccine is not live and therefore, cannot cause the flu. Some people mistakenly confuse flu symptoms with the vaccine side effects. The most common side effects are:

- Soreness, redness or swelling where the shot is given
- Low-grade fever and aches
- Runny nose, sore throat, cough, and headache (nasal mist only)

Almost all people who receive the influenza vaccine have no serious problems. However, employees who believe that they are experiencing adverse effects related to the vaccination should contact [Occupational Health](#).

## **I am pregnant. Should I get the flu vaccine?**

Yes. Pregnant women should receive the injectable flu shot. It is especially important for pregnant women to get the flu shot because they are more likely to have serious complications to themselves and their pregnancy if they become ill. According to the CDC, they can receive the flu shot at any time during their pregnancy.

## **DOCUMENTATION**

### **How can I get a copy of my vaccine record?**

If you receive a copy of your flu vaccine record at the time of service, keep this copy in a safe place until the end of the flu season. We also recommend that you take a picture of it with your smart phone or scan it onto your computer.

If you get your flu shot at an on-site clinic, you may not get a copy of your vaccine record at the time of service. You will receive a confirmation email once your flu vaccine has been recorded by OHS. You may use this as proof of vaccination.

If you received your flu vaccine from Walgreens, either at the on-site clinic or at their [retail location](#), you can also access your records by using [www.walgreens.com](http://www.walgreens.com). You will need to make an account if you don't have one already.

All vaccines given in Maryland must be reported to the Department of Health. Anyone may access their own vaccine records by creating an account at [Maryland MyIR](#).

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## I received my flu vaccine at Walgreens using a voucher. How will my manager know that I got my flu shot?

*New this year:* You must upload documentation of your flu shot to [VMS](#), even if you received it at Walgreens using a voucher. Walgreens will not be reporting vaccines to Johns Hopkins in time for the **December 10th** deadline.

## I received my flu vaccine at an outside location. How do I get my flu clip?

For East Baltimore Campus employees, [flu clips](#) are available in the [Employee Health and Wellness Clinic \(EHWC\)](#) located in the Phipps Building, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 8am-3pm. You must provide proof of receiving your vaccine or already used the self-submit online tool. You may also pick up a clip at any on-site flu clinic. All other entities may contact their local OHS office for flu clip pick-up locations. *If you received your vaccine at Walgreens, please wait until you receive the email confirmation or bring your receipt from the store.*



## EXCEPTIONS

### What about a person who has medical or religious reasons for declining vaccination?

An exception to the vaccination policy may be requested for certain medical reasons, including documentation of severe allergy to the vaccine or components as defined by the most current recommendations of the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) or a history of Guillain-Barré syndrome within six weeks of an influenza vaccine. If receiving the vaccination conflicts with sincerely held beliefs, a request for religious accommodation may be made.



All Medical and Religious Exception Request forms must be received no later **Nov. 9, 2021**.

### How do I request an exception?

#### **Medical Exception**

Personnel must submit an exception form and a letter from their provider using the [\(VMS\) Vaccine Management System](#).

#### **Religious Exception**

Religious exceptions can also be requested using [VMS](#).

### I received an exception last year. Do I have to submit the paperwork again this year?

**Yes. All personnel who have a medical or religious exception must submit a new request.** Because the composition and availability of flu vaccines changes from year to year, certain allergies or concerns may no longer be relevant.

### If my request for a medical or religious exception is approved, will I still be able to work?

Yes. Those who cannot receive the flu vaccine, whether for religious or medical reasons, will be required to properly wear a protective surgical mask over their mouth and nose when within 6 feet of any patient and when entering a patient room during the influenza season. The effective dates of the flu season will be identified by Department of Hospital Epidemiology and Infection Control (HEIC). This important step to prevent flu transmission is supported by national patient safety and infectious disease prevention organizations.

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## COMPLIANCE

### What happens if I don't comply with the policy?

#### **Faculty and staff**

Any JHM employee covered by this policy who fails to receive a vaccination before the compliance deadline and who has not received an exception will be placed on an unpaid administrative leave of one week or less. If, at the end of the administrative leave, the employee has not met the vaccination requirement, the employee will be considered to have voluntarily resigned.

#### **Non-employees**

Students, volunteers, vendors and temporary workers who do not comply will not be permitted to enter patient care or clinical care areas for the duration of the flu season.

#### **Medical staff**

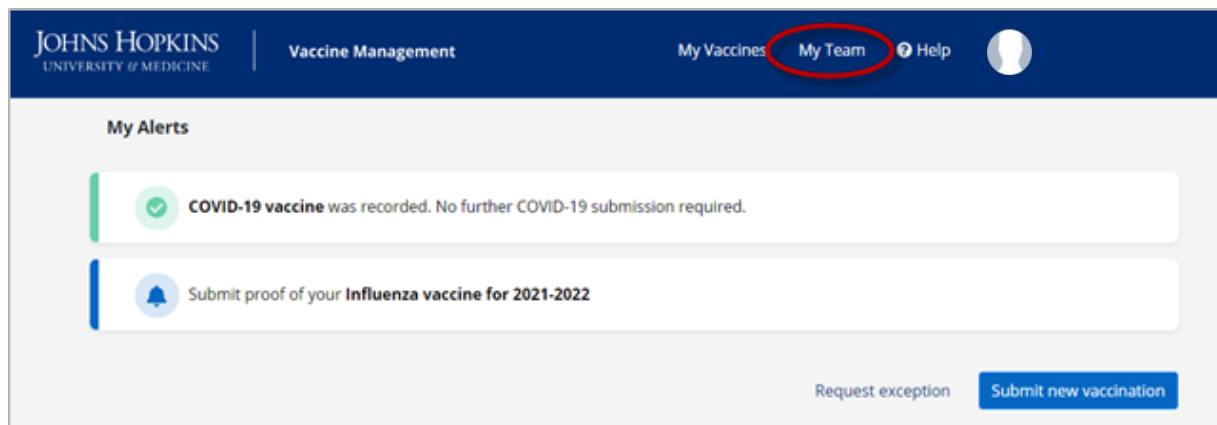
Medical staff at all entities who do not comply will be placed on administrative suspension of privileges for the duration of the flu season, and will be denied access to patient and clinical care areas. Such actions will not be reportable to the Maryland Board of Physicians or the National Physician Data Base (NPDB).

Anyone granted a medical exception or religious accommodation is required wear a surgical mask within six feet of a patient during the influenza season. Those who fail to do so will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

### I am a manager. How do I track vaccination compliance?

Managers may see their team's compliance by accessing VMS and clicking on "[My Team](#)" on the banner at the top of the page. This will list all of their direct reports and show their compliance status. This is based on SAP organizational unit.

If you are a manager and do not have the "[My Team](#)" tab, please contact your Human Resources Representative.



## MORE INFORMATION

Centers for Disease Control: [cdc.gov/flu](https://cdc.gov/flu)

Health, Safety and Environment: [hopkinsmedicine.org/hse](https://hopkinsmedicine.org/hse)

Questions: [MandatoryFluVaccine@jhmi.edu](mailto:MandatoryFluVaccine@jhmi.edu)