Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)
COVID-19 Emergency Regulation
Vaccination Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Team Member FAQ

Q. If I've already been vaccinated, how do I provide proof of vaccination?

A. If you received your COVID-19 vaccination from a Ballad Health vaccine POD, community vaccination center or a Ballad Health Medical Associates clinic, we already have your record of immunization on file in Epic. **Otherwise, you will be required to bring, in person, to Team Member Health a printed copy of your COVID-19 immunization record that includes the vaccine brand, lot number and the date and facility where you were vaccinated, in-person, before 6 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 5.**

Q. If I choose to get vaccinated, what is the deadline for meeting the vaccine requirement?

A. To meet this federal requirement, to be considered fully vaccinated, all eligible team members must have received the necessary shot to be fully vaccinated by 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 4.

Based on this timeline, team members who choose to receive the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine **must receive their first dose by 6 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 5, at the latest.** The single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine is also an option, and this must also be received by 6 p.m. on Dec. 5.

Q. Are Ballad Health PODs offering team member vaccinations?

A. Vaccination PODs (point of dispensing) are operating at Bristol Regional Medical Center, Holston Valley Medical Center, Johnson City Medical Center, Johnston Memorial Hospital and Norton Community Hospital to accommodate all team members. COVID-19 vaccinations are being offered at no charge to team members, volunteers, physicians, medical residents and specified contractors.

Team members can visit our Ballad Health COVID-19 Vaccine Resource Center at balladhealthnews.org/covid-19-vaccine-resource-center for POD schedules. We will continue to review our operating schedule and extend dates or hours as needed to accommodate team members' schedules.

Q. If I opt out of vaccination, will my employment with Ballad Health be recorded as a termination or resignation?

A. Under our new COVID-19 vaccination policy, all team members will be required to be vaccinated by the CMS federal mandate deadline unless they have an approved deferral, medical or religious exemption. This means if you choose to opt out of vaccination and do not comply with the federal mandate or our policy, your employment status will be moved to inactive and team members can choose if they are coded as a voluntary resignation or involuntary termination.

With a resignation, you will still be eligible for rehire. Involuntary termination makes you ineligible for rehire. Vaccination is an important decision, and we want you to take the time you need to ask questions, research the science and discuss vaccination with your physician and family. If have

questions, you can email our Corporate Emergency Operations Center (CEOC) at CEOC-Vaccines@balladhealth.org and a member of the clinical executive team will ensure you have credible information to help you make an informed decision. Should you choose to become vaccinated at a later time, we hope you will consider returning to Ballad Health and caring for our patients and communities.

Q. What is the process for submitting a medical or religious exemption request?

A. Exemption requests can be made by clicking the link to the web form on the Human Resources department page on the Ballad Health Intranet and following the directions on the form.

Submissions must be received by 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 24. Also, those requesting a medical exemption must provide the required physician documentation by scanned email to teammemberhealth@balladhealth.org by 4 p.m. on Nov. 24.

PLEASE NOTE – Several updates have been made to the exemption form, addressing future COVID-19 vaccines, pregnancy related documentation and the choice to be considered voluntary resignation or involuntary termination if your exemption isn't approved (or you chose not to comply).

Q. How will I know if my exemption request is approved?

A. We are actively reviewing exemption requests and will begin communicating decisions as early as this week. Our goal is to have all requests for medical or religious reasons reviewed and communicated each team member by Wednesday, Dec. 1. Team members who are granted an authorized exemption will be required to follow all respiratory protection guidelines and policies. Leadership will be made aware only that an exemption or deferral has been approved, not the reason why it was given. We are required to follow OSHA guidelines depending on vaccination status about eating together, in-person meetings, and more.

Q. How does the suspension of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) mandate affect Ballad Health?

A. Originally there were two (2) different mandates impacting large businesses, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) mandate for COVID-19 vaccination (which allowed for a weekly testing opt out) has been suspended while the matter is litigated in the courts. This suspension **DOES NOT apply to Ballad Health** or reverse the current federal mandate from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) that we're required to follow.

All Ballad Health team members are still required to be vaccinated for COVID-19 – with their first dose by no later than Dec. 5, 2021, and to be fully vaccinated by Jan. 4, 2022, unless they have a medical or religious exemption.

CMS vaccination mandate for all healthcare workers

On Nov. 4, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services published a rule implementing President Joe Biden's orders, which require certain healthcare organizations to ensure policies are in place requiring employees and other individuals associated with the organizations to demonstrate they have been fully vaccinated by a deadline established in the rule. Because Ballad Health facilities must comply with Medicare Conditions of Participation to receive Medicare or Medicaid reimbursement, Ballad Health must comply. Across the country, this new CMS mandate applies to 76,000 providers and covers more than 17 million healthcare workers.