



MEMORANDUM

To: All Employees

From: Ailee Strausser, Vice President, Human Resources

Date: September 9, 2021

Re: COVID-19 Universal Vaccination Policy

Over the past several months, our employees have demonstrated extraordinary commitment, compassion, and endurance as we have navigated COVID-19 together. These 18 months have been a time of tremendous personal and work-related stress and sadness, but also proof that resolve, service, and teamwork can help overcome any challenge. I thank everyone for how you have persevered, followed safety protocols, and supported the organization and those we serve. We have succeeded because of you. Your willingness to be there for others has made, and continues to make, a profound impact on the health and well-being of our patients and clients, as well as on your fellow caregiving professionals.

Throughout the pandemic, we have consistently followed the guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), and Pennsylvania state and local officials. In addition, we have closely monitored the data regarding the effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccines and any potential side effects.

Since the COVID-19 vaccines began rolling out at the end of 2020, they have performed extremely well in preventing severe illness. They also have proven to be remarkably safe in hundreds of millions of people who have been vaccinated worldwide. Unfortunately, with increased cases of the highly contagious Delta variant, we continue to see a surge in COVID-19 exposures around the country, mainly in the unvaccinated population. It's anticipated this surge will increase in the fall and winter if a much greater percentage of the population isn't vaccinated soon.

To that end, there have been several recent public announcements related to COVID-19 vaccines. On August 13, the City of Philadelphia announced that healthcare workers will need to be either vaccinated or designated as exempt by October 15, 2021. On August 18, President Joe Biden announced that nursing homes participating in the Medicare and Medicaid programs will be required to have all staff vaccinated against COVID-19 in order to continue receiving federal funding for the programs. And on August 23, the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine became the first to receive full FDA approval.

For these reasons, we are implementing a new Universal Vaccination Policy that requires all Abramson Senior Care employees, volunteers, vendor partners, and contractors to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 by November 1, 2021; however, if your work requires you to provide care for patients located in Philadelphia, you must comply with the vaccination policy by October 15. Please note that we're taking this step alongside the leading healthcare systems and services in Philadelphia and the surrounding areas, as well as after reviewing recommendations from numerous professional medical organizations that include the American Medical

Association, the American Nurses Association, and the CDC. All have strongly advocated that healthcare and long-term care employers require their staffs to be vaccinated.

Here are some important details:

- If you previously provided a copy of your vaccination card to the Human Resources department, you do not need to take any further action.
- If you received your vaccine through an Abramson Senior Care (ASC) on-site clinic, we **will still need a copy of your vaccination card**. Please provide a copy to the Human Resources department **by November 1, 2021; however, if your work requires you to provide care for patients located in Philadelphia, you must provide a copy by October 15.**
- If you plan to receive or have already received your vaccine outside of ASC and have not done so already, provide a copy of your vaccination card to the Human Resources department via fax (215-371-1877) or email (ltracz@abramsonseniorcare.org) **by no later than November 1, 2021; however, if your work requires you to provide care for patients located in Philadelphia, you must provide a copy by October 15.**
- Effective immediately, all new hires will be required to show proof of COVID vaccination prior to starting. New hires will be permitted to begin work after receiving one dose.

We will address the following in subsequent communications to you:

- Process for religious and medical exemptions/deferrals and prevention standards for individuals with approved exemptions.
- Vaccine deferrals related to pregnancy or breast feeding.
- Requirement of vaccination for vendors and our many partners who physically come to any of ASC's locations.
- Consequences for individuals who decline vaccination and have not received an approved medical or religious exemption.

I want to be clear in saying we did not make this decision easily. We respect everyone's views and perspectives. We understand that many who have consciously chosen not to get vaccinated may be disappointed by this decision, but we believe the benefit to public health and the safety of our patients, each other, and our communities is paramount.

All COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the United States have been shown to be safe and effective at preventing COVID-19 and reducing risk for hospitalization and death. Getting vaccinated is the most effective way to protect yourself and everyone around you. Currently, more than 97% of all United States deaths due to COVID-19 are in unvaccinated patients.

The vaccine is widely available at no charge to you; visit www.vaccines.gov for more information on community sites. You may choose to be vaccinated at any one of the many community-based sites such as retail pharmacies, but you must be prepared to provide the Human Resources department with proof of that vaccination. The vaccine is free of charge regardless of where you receive it.

As a team, we have come together to create and maintain a safe environment. To continue these efforts and set an example within the healthcare and senior care communities, it is vital we adjust how we respond and act in the interest of communal health. We are confident that together, we can make a difference in the fight against this pandemic so that we can continue to grow and meet the needs of the community we serve. I thank you for your support and cooperation. We will share more information as soon as it becomes available.