

Baystate Health

Influenza Immunization

I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to protect patients, employees, family members and the community from influenza infection through a system-wide annual immunization program.

II. SCOPE:

This policy applies to all Baystate Health employees, members of the Medical Staff who work on-site in Baystate Health facilities, contracted personnel, students, volunteers and vendors who work for Baystate Health or enter a Baystate Health facility (collectively "personnel").

III. POLICY:

- A.** All personnel included in the scope of the policy must be immunized against influenza each year by the start of flu season, as designated by Employee Health Services and Infection Control, unless granted an approved written exemption under this Policy.
- B.** Influenza vaccine is available free of charge to all Baystate Health personnel. The vaccination program is coordinated through Employee Health Services. Dates of the influenza vaccination program will be determined by Employee Health and Infection Control annually and communicated throughout the organization. The vaccine may be administered by Employee Health Services or other qualified Baystate Health clinical staff known as "Flu Vaccine Champions".
- C.** If an individual is vaccinated by a provider or clinic other than through the Baystate Health vaccination program (i.e. physician office, pharmacy, or public clinic) they must provide proof of immunization to Employee Health Services by the deadline date. Proof of immunization may include a physician's note, after visit summary, or copy of a flu vaccine record. All documents must include the individual's name and date of birth. Cash register receipts will not be considered appropriate documentation of vaccination.
- D.** Personnel with a substantiated medical contraindication to the influenza vaccination may be eligible for a medical exemption. Personnel applying for an exemption on the basis of a medical contraindication must submit a Medical Exemption Request Form completed by their treating provider to Employee Health Services by the date determined by Employee Health Services and Infection Control and publicized in the annual influenza immunization communications.
- E.** Personnel with a sincerely held religious objection to the influenza vaccination may be eligible for a religious exemption. Personnel applying for an exemption on the basis of a sincerely held religious belief must submit a Religious Exemption Request Form and may be asked to submit documentation to support the request by the date determined by Employee Health Services and Infection Control and publicized in the annual influenza immunization communications.

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- F. All exemptions must be approved in writing by Employee Health Services (for medical exemptions) or Human Resources (for religious exemptions). Employees with approved religious or medical exemptions must wear a mask at all times while on Baystate Health premises for the duration of the designated flu season.
- G. Employee Health Services will maintain a record of influenza immunization or exemption. Managers can view their team's compliance rates in Workday throughout the annual campaign.
- H. In the event of an influenza vaccine shortage, Baystate Health will follow immunization prioritization and direction from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and/or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH). The situation will be evaluated and decisions regarding needed modifications to the annual vaccine program will be made by the Occupational Health Medical Director, Hospital Epidemiologist, Human Resources, Pharmacy and Administrative leadership.
- I. Influenza vaccine education will be offered annually to all Baystate Health employees as part of annual mandatory training.
- J. Baystate Health managers are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy. If necessary, managers or employees should work with Human Resources to help resolve issues of non-compliance.
- K. Personnel who do not receive an annual influenza vaccination within the required time frame for vaccination, which will be determined and communicated on an annual basis, will be subject to termination of employment and/or loss of privileges and/or access to Baystate Health facilities, unless the individual has been granted written exemption under this Policy.

RESPONSIBILITY OF:

- A. ***Infectious Disease and Epidemiology***
 - 1. Provide input and direction for developing the annual flu vaccine plan and determine time and duration of flu season.
 - 2. Provide direction for addressing special circumstances such as flu vaccine shortage and other critical issues.
 - 3. Monitor impact of flu vaccine program on patient safety and quality care.
 - 4. Participate, as needed, in the review of requests for medical exemption.
- B. ***Employee Health Services***
 - 1. Develop and implement an annual plan for immunizing employees, members of the medical staff, students, volunteers and contracted personnel.
 - 2. Maintain records of immunization
 - 3. Provide direction to managers for accessing reports in Workday to monitor compliance rates for the employees in their departments.
 - 4. Notify non-employee group representatives of recording process. Work with designated departments and individuals to obtain and maintain records of

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members of the Medical Staff, students, volunteers and contracted personnel regarding immunization status and report compliance to those respective groups.

5. Review and approve or deny requests for medical exemption.
6. Submit report on immunization rates to MDPH and the National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) in accordance with reporting and data collection guidelines of the Commissioner (105 CMR 130.325(I), 140.150(C) and 150.002 (D)(8).

C. *Managers and Supervisors*

1. Ensure that all personnel have been informed about the policy and annual immunization program dates.
2. Encourage personnel to receive the vaccination provided through Employee Health Services and the Baystate Health Flu Vaccine Champions or from another provider or clinic of their choosing.
3. Take an active role to monitor compliance reports in Workday and work with Human Resources to address personnel refusing to comply with the Policy.

D. *Human Resources*

1. Help managers and personnel answer questions and resolve issues regarding the interpretation and application of this policy.
2. Review and approve or deny requests for religious exemption.
3. Assist managers with the process for personnel who are refusing to be vaccinated.

IV. RELATED FORM

- [Medical Exemption Request Form](#)
- [Religious Exemption Request Form](#)

V. REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY:

Approval:



Kristin Morales-Lemieux.

Senior Vice President & Chief Human Resources Officer



Sarah Haessler, MD

Hospital Epidemiologist, Division of Infectious Disease
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Replaces:

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