



To: All Employees

From: Scott Hugill, City Manager

Date: October 13, 2021

Subject: COVID-19 Vaccination Policy

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### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this COVID-19 vaccination policy is to: (1) protect the health and safety of the Mountlake Terrace community and organization; and (2) reduce the incidents of serious illness and possible death of employees from COVID-19 in order to continue providing services.

To meet these needs, all City of Mountlake Terrace employees are required to be vaccinated for COVID-19. This requirement is a condition of employment applicable to all current and future city employees.

### **BACKGROUND**

COVID-19 continues to persist in Washington State, including an increase in infections caused by variants that are more readily transmitted than prior forms of the virus. This increase continues to strain healthcare resources, lead to more hospitalizations, and potentially more deaths.

In addition to the strain on the medical system, our organization has had countless hours of productivity lost when employees have to quarantine following an exposure.<sup>1</sup>

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) have determined that the COVID-19 vaccines that have received emergency use authorization by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration (“FDA”) are safe and effective against infection with the coronavirus that causes COVID-19.

### **SCOPE**

With limited exceptions, all City of Mountlake Terrace employees are required to be vaccinated for COVID-19.<sup>2</sup> This requirement is a condition of employment applicable to all current and future city employees.

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<sup>1</sup> While some private and public sector jobs can be done remotely, this does not work for Mountlake Terrace, where in-person communication and coordination is essential to serving the community in a timely manner.

<sup>2</sup> Exemptions: Employees seeking an exemption from this policy due to a medical condition or because of a sincerely held religious belief must submit a completed Request for Accommodation form to Human Resources to begin the interactive accommodation process as noted in the timeline.

City employees who refuse to be vaccinated will be subject to dismissal from employment for failing to meet legal job qualifications. The city will work with labor organizations on meeting collective bargaining obligations and adhering to civil service rules.

**TIMELINE**

Because current COVID-19 vaccines require two or more weeks to become effective, this policy will be implemented over a multi-week period.

All employees are required to obtain their first COVID-19 vaccination injection within twenty-one (21) days of the effective date of this policy, and to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 within eight (8) weeks as a condition of their employment.<sup>3</sup>

- Two-dose Vaccine: Employees and applicants receiving a federally approved two-dose mRNA vaccine (such as the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines) are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after the second dose. These vaccines have a waiting period of 21 to 28 days between doses.
- Single-dose Vaccine: Employees and applicants receiving a federally approved single-dose vaccine (such as the Johnson & Johnson vaccine), are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving the vaccine.

*Example of Timeline:* This policy goes into effect on Day 1. An employee receives their first Moderna dose on Day 21. They will receive their second dose on Day 56 (28 days after the first dose). The employee is fully vaccinated two weeks later.

For the policy’s initial implementation in 2021, the following timeline will be used:

Friday, October 15, 2021 .....	Policy implementation
Friday, October 29, 2021 .....	Applications for exemption (medical or religious) due to Human Resources
	- and -
	Last day for employees who are already fully vaccinated to provide proof of vaccination to Human Resources
Friday, November 5, 2021 .....	Last day for non-vaccinated employees to get first vaccine dose (unless granted exemption)
Friday, November 12, 2021 .....	Last day to provide Human Resources proof of first dose (first of a two-dose vaccine or single-dose vaccine)
Friday, December 10, 2021 .....	Last day for employees to get second dose (if necessary)
Friday, December 17, 2021 .....	Last day to provide Human Resources proof of second dose

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<sup>3</sup> Employees who are currently unvaccinated and who have previously tested positive for COVID-19 are currently required by the CDC to wait 90 days prior to receiving the vaccination. Accordingly, for employees who have previously tested positive for COVID-19 will be required to: (1) submit their documentation of a positive test result to Human Resources; (2) work with Human Resources to identify the timing of when the first dose can be administered (e.g., 90 days from the positive test plus 8 weeks).

No later than 28 days from the implementation of this policy employees will be required to provide to Human Resources either proof of vaccination or an approved reasonable accommodation exempting them from this vaccination requirement because of a disability or a sincerely-held religious belief.

All applicants for employment with the city are also required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 prior to their employment. Applicants who are offered a position with the city who are not fully vaccinated will need to be vaccinated before starting work.

**This vaccination requirement is a condition of employment. Employees who have not provided proof of receiving a first vaccination by Day 21 and (when necessary) a second vaccination by Day 49, or who have not received a reasonable accommodation exempting them from this requirement, shall be separated from employment.**

Employees may be permitted up to one (1) hour of time during the workday for a vaccination appointment that has been scheduled during work hours (one hour for each vaccine dose). Employees who need time off to be vaccinated shall coordinate their time off with their supervisors. When scheduling vaccination appointments, employees should keep in mind that they are not considered fully vaccinated until two (2) weeks after their final injection.

Agencies and businesses providing COVID-19 vaccinations can be found through the state's Department of Health Vaccine Locator or by contacting the Snohomish Health District.

#### **TESTING FOR THOSE EXEMPT FROM VACCINATION**

Employees receiving an exemption from vaccination must provide proof of a negative viral antigen test or a negative nucleic acid amplification test ("NAAT") twice per week (spaced so that the tests are 3-4 days apart), and show proof of their test results twice per week to Human Resources. This information will be treated as confidential consistent with EEOC guidance to the extent permitted by applicable law.

Per current CDC guidance, employees exempt from vaccination who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the last three (3) months and have recovered do not need to be tested as long as they do not develop new symptoms of COVID-19. If CDC or DOH guidance changes, such employees will be required to be tested with the same frequency listed above.

Employees who are required to participate in this regular testing program are to obtain testing at their own expense. Employees will be permitted to take up to thirty (30) minutes of paid time off to get tested at the Lynnwood testing site:

3815 – 196th Street SW #135, Lynnwood, WA 98036; 844.263.9994  
(appointments are required).

Any leave necessary in excess of 30 minutes may be utilized through the employee's accrued paid time off for COVID-19 testing if they comply with the City's policies for requesting and using paid time off.