

September 28, 2021



Hi Team –

I continue to be encouraged by the progress our TriHealth Team has made in recent weeks towards our goal of a 100% vaccination rate across the system by October 31, all to protect our patients and staff, lessen the severity of this fourth wave of the pandemic, and hopefully prevent

future waves of this unpredictable and determined virus. As of Monday, more than 85% of team members are either fully or partially vaccinated or have received an approved medical or religious exemption or a pregnancy deferment. Additionally, ALL of our 800+ TriHealth leaders have now met this vaccination requirement – a testament to their commitment to servant leadership and a shining illustration of what leading by example is all about!



Remember that this is the last week – ending Saturday, October 2 – for team members to start the Moderna two-shot regimen in order to ensure full vaccination by October 31. I again encourage you not to wait until the end of the week as we have a limited number of available appointments and they are filling up quickly. For those who prefer the Pfizer vaccine regimen, you will need to start by October 9 to ensure full vaccination by the 31st. And we also have an adequate supply of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine for those who would prefer the one-dose regimen. Here is the [link to schedule a COVID vaccination appointment](#). While TriHealth’s vaccine requirement applies only to the two-shot mRNA vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna) and the single-shot J&J vaccine, last Friday the CDC along with the FDA endorsed the use of an additional “booster” dose of the Pfizer vaccine for healthcare and other at-risk workers. As always, TriHealth will follow the science and the guidance of the CDC, FDA and our own clinical experts as we evaluate the need for and timing of boosters for our team members and physicians. We will share more details on TriHealth’s plans for booster shots in the coming weeks.

Since announcing our vaccine requirement in early August, we have placed our highest priority on hearing and understanding the concerns of team members with reservations about the vaccines. Through our Vaccine Discussion Forums held over the past six weeks across our system and our August and September Team Member Town Hall livestreams, we’ve worked to answer those questions and concerns by sharing the evidence on the safety and effectiveness of the vaccines... along with personal stories as well as the real risks of remaining unvaccinated.

Vaccine Requirement Timeline for Team Members

10/2/2021	10/9/2021	10/31/2021
Last day to get Moderna	Last day to get Pfizer	Last day to get Johnson & Johnson /Vaccine Deadline
Last day to get the 1st dose of the Moderna vaccine to be compliant with the deadline.	Last day to get the 1st dose of the Pfizer vaccine to be compliant with the deadline.	All team members need to have received one or both vaccine doses. <small>*2 doses of Pfizer or Moderna OR 1 dose of Johnson & Johnson</small>



We continue to respect every team member’s right to discern and to ultimately decide whether to become vaccinated. But with the effective date of our vaccination requirement just a little more than a month away, we

now also need to begin planning work schedules for November. Team members who choose not to be vaccinated by October 31 will not be able to be placed on the work schedules. So, in the days ahead, our leaders will be having one-on-one discussions with those team members who continue to have reservations about being vaccinated. As always, these conversations will be respectful, caring and honest. Our goal has always been to help team members through this discernment and decision-making process and that continues today. And, I need to emphasize what I've said many times before - **we do not want to lose a single team member over this requirement** – as we in good conscience put in place the proven practices that will keep our patients and fellow team members safe, as well as work to comply with recently announced federal vaccine mandates for healthcare workers.

COVID-Related Hospitalizations Remain High

In recent weeks, we've seen our highest number of COVID-related hospitalizations at TriHealth, since the start of this fourth wave in July. And so, every day we are balancing bed capacity and staffing with the scheduling of elective procedures and surgeries, all to ensure that we have the necessary beds and staffing to care for the sickest of patients and ER admissions where and when needed.

Even with these battle-tested and proven surge and capacity management initiatives in place, we know our team members and physicians - particularly our frontline caregivers – are tired and demoralized by this pandemic, now stretching into its 21st month. To help combat this understandable and heightened fatigue in our hospitals, ambulatory centers and practices, we are aggressively recruiting more nurses and other caregivers while also incentivizing TriHealth nurses from other departments to help supplement our ICU and inpatient nursing teams through the remaining weeks of this fourth wave. We are also increasing hours for essential support roles – such as EVS, concierge and patient relations – to allow nurses and bedside caregivers to focus solely on patient care activities instead of non-nursing tasks. Similarly, we are supporting our nurse leaders who have been called upon to assist in patient care roles during this surge by bringing other leaders to the patient care units to help with nurse leader rounds and hourly safety rounds. And I'm pleased to announce that through a partnership with The Health Collaborative, we will be offering resiliency training for our frontline nursing leaders and teams beginning in just a few weeks.

Words cannot adequately express how proud the Board, our community and the entire leadership team is of our dedicated and selfless frontline caregivers and support staff, and we will continue to do everything we can to support you during what I hope to be the final weeks of the fourth wave of this once-in-a-century pandemic.

Flu Shots Now Available

Now that we have officially transitioned from Summer to Fall, the shorter days and crisp, cool weather also mean we are fast approaching flu season. And with the Delta variant continuing its hold across our region, as healthcare workers we need to also get our flu shot in order to help protect our patients and each other – to “do no harm” against influenza – just as we are doing with the COVID-19 vaccine during this time of increased risk of viral transmission. As has been our practice for nearly ten years, the flu vaccine will be required for all TriHealth team members, physicians, and volunteers, unless a medical or religious exemption is approved. So, as we head down the home stretch of our COVID-19 vaccination requirement, today we are launching our annual flu shot campaign. To make the vaccine process as easy and convenient as possible, TriHealth Employee Health vaccine clinics are now open to administer both the flu and COVID-19 vaccines – during the same appointment, if needed. These clinics are at Bethesda North Outpatient Imaging, Good Samaritan Hospital, and McCullough-Hyde Memorial Hospital through November 5 and are by appointment only. Please [visit the link here](#) to sign up for a convenient time. And if you choose to receive a flu shot at a non-TriHealth clinic, you can simply provide your vaccination record to Employee Health. November 12 is the deadline to receive the flu shot, and all medical and religious exemption forms are due by October 29.



Standing By Our Decision For Patient Safety

In closing, I want to emphasize once again that our decision to require the COVID vaccine is solely based on our commitment to put the safety of our patients and team members first. The science, and the evidence, are clear and overwhelming — the vaccines are safe and effective in reducing the spread of COVID-19 and are among the most important tools in bringing an end to this pandemic. And please keep in mind: this requirement is no longer simply a TriHealth decision. New mandates issued by the federal government are now requiring that all healthcare workers across the country be vaccinated. And courts nationwide and locally are rejecting lawsuits aimed at overturning these requirements, including the federal court ruling issued last Friday in Northern Kentucky in favor of St. Elizabeth Healthcare’s legal right to require their employees to be vaccinated.

If you have not yet received your first dose of Moderna or Pfizer or the single-shot J&J vaccine, [please go to this link](#) to make an appointment today. Your many talents and contributions are so valuable to TriHealth and the patients we serve. We want you on our team so that together we can continue our journey in Getting Healthcare Right for all those we serve – through this pandemic and beyond – as One Team, TriHealth Strong!