

POLICY: Seasonal Influenza Vaccination
SECTION: IC.02.04.01

ORIGINAL: 8/10/15

APPROVAL: 6/2016

CHAPTER: Infection Control

I. POLICY:

For the health and safety of staff, patients and visitors, all health care personnel will be required to have an annual influenza vaccination or sign a declination form and meet the requirements as set forth in the guidelines of this policy. Requirements by the local Public Health Department will supersede the elements specified herein.

II. PURPOSE:

Influenza is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. The most effective way to prevent infection from an influenza virus is to receive an annual influenza vaccination. In order to ensure a safe and healthy work environment, influenza vaccination should be provided for hospital employees, physicians, volunteers and contract staff on an annual basis. All Health Care Personnel (HCP), including but not limited to students and vendors, are required to comply with this policy and provide proof of vaccination to their Dignity Health facility annually. This will minimize the exposure to patients from infected workers.

III. DEFINITIONS:

1. Health Care Personnel (HCP): All paid and unpaid persons working on hospital campus settings (including off-site locations) including but not limited to staff, physicians, volunteers, students, contracted employees, registry and vendors.
2. Influenza Season: October 1st through March 31st (or as designated by the local Public Health Department)
3. Masking Timeline: The masking period is defined as one month after the start of the influenza season and ends March 31st (local Public Health Department may extend this timeline beyond March 31st). If a vaccine is administered after the start of the masking period, the health care personnel must wear a mask for 14 days in order for the vaccination to take effect.
4. Campus of the Hospital: The main Hospital and Rehabilitation Campuses and all structures even if they are not contiguous to the main building.
5. Patient Care or Clinical Area: Includes the physical or recognized borders of inpatient and outpatient areas where patients are seen, evaluated, treated, or wait to be seen.
6. Mask-Free Zones: The mask-free zone is limited to the main lobby, hospital cafeteria, break rooms, private administrative offices or designated areas as

defined by the facility. Masks are not required when eating in the cafeteria or break room, or when alone in a private administrative office.

IV. PRINCIPALLY AFFECTED DEPARTMENT:

All Dignity Health facilities, including but not limited to, hospitals, ambulatory care centers, home health agencies and Dignity Health related clinics.

V. GUIDELINES:

1. All health care workers will be offered the influenza vaccine annually at no cost.
2. Information regarding the vaccine and transmission of influenza will be made available to all health care workers.
3. Health care workers who choose to declare a medical/religious exemption as defined (V.8) or decline the vaccine will receive education on the importance of the annual influenza vaccination for HCPs, sign a declination form, and will be required to wear a surgical mask at all times in patient care areas or as designated by the local Public Health Department.
4. Hospital approved surgical masks will be provided for all individuals who decline immunization. They will receive written instructions on properly putting on and taking off the mask. A properly worn mask will cover the nose and mouth. No handmade or personal masks from home will be allowed. Masks can be obtained from department managers or as designated by the individual facility.
5. Health care workers who receive their vaccination at a location other than their local facility must provide proof of vaccination as designated by the facility's Employee Health department or he/she will be required to wear a surgical mask as described above.
6. All Dignity Health facilities must have a process in place to identify and monitor compliance and take corrective action when required.
7. All Dignity Health employees who choose not to be vaccinated and not wear a mask during the influenza season as defined in V.3 will be subject to corrective action as defined by the individual facility.
8. Exemption to influenza vaccination may be granted for documented medical contraindication (including disabilities) or religious beliefs.

Medical Exemptions

A licensed health care provider must confirm an evidence-based medical contraindication against the influenza vaccination. A documented adverse reaction to the influenza vaccine, a documented severe allergy to the vaccine that could compromise health, or a documented medical condition where vaccinations could

compromise health, are all examples of medical contraindications for obtaining an exemption to the influenza vaccine.

Staff is required to submit medical documentation, along with the Declination of Influenza Vaccination for Medical Contraindication form as designated by the individual facility. Medical contraindications must be re-assessed each year and an updated declination form must be completed and submitted annually.

Religious Exemptions

Requests for religious exemptions will be granted when receipt of the influenza vaccine is contrary to sincerely held religious beliefs, practices or observances.

Staff is required to submit the Declination of Influenza Vaccination for Religious Beliefs as designated by the individual facility.

- 9. Should the influenza vaccine not be available, the requirements of this policy may be temporarily waived until a supply becomes available.

OWNER/AUTHOR:	Employee Health Coordinator
REFERENCES:	MMCR – Policy: Influenza Vaccine Program retired 2015. CDC. (2013). <i>Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices — United States, 2013–2014</i> . Retrieved from: http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr6207a1.htm?s_cid=rr6207a1_w CDC. (2011). <i>Immunization of health care personnel: recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)</i> . MMWR. Retrieved from: http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/rr/rr6007.pdf CDC. (2006). <i>Influenza Vaccination of Health care Personnel: Recommendations of the Health care Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC) and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)</i> . Retrieved from: http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5502a1.htm The Joint Commission (TJC). (2016). <i>Hospital Accreditation Standards, IC.02.04.01 – annual influenza vaccination program</i> .
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DATES REVIEWED/REVISED:	