

2018 - 2019 ANNUAL INFLUENZA CAMPAIGN

Teammate Frequently Asked Questions

The Atrium Health Annual Influenza Campaign is offered to emphasize the importance the flu vaccination has in minimizing the spread of the flu virus to our teammates, our families and our patients. The 2018-2019 Influenza Campaign begins **Monday, October 1, 2018** and lasts **through Friday, November 9, 2018**. Please use these frequently asked questions to learn more about this year's campaign.

Note: [Click here](#) for Leader Flu Frequently Asked Questions.

[Flu Vaccination and Sticker](#)

[Accountability with Annual Influenza Campaign](#)

[Eligibility and Exemptions](#)

[Mask Requirement](#)

[Family Medical Leave \(FMLA\) and Vaccine Compliance](#)

[Flu Campaign vs. Flu Season](#)

[The Influenza/Other Designation eForm](#)

[More Information](#)

Flu Vaccination and Sticker

Will there be a mandatory flu vaccination policy this year?

Yes, Atrium Health will have a mandatory flu vaccination policy.

Governing bodies such as the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), The Joint Commission (TJC) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) view mandatory influenza programs favorably. Many regional healthcare organizations already have implemented mandatory influenza vaccination policies.

Are there published infection prevention opinions on mandatory flu programs?

Yes. This is [one opinion from the Infectious Diseases Society of America](#) (IDSA).

What is the definition of the mandatory flu vaccination policy?

All teammates must receive a flu vaccine, whether through Atrium Health or an outside provider. Teammates who cannot receive the vaccine for medical reasons must submit a [medical exemption form](#) or medical documentation. If you have a religious reason for not taking the flu vaccine and previously submitted a religious exemption form a new religious exemption form will

not be required. If you are a new hire since last year's flu campaign and have a religious reason for not taking the flu vaccine you must submit a [religious exemption form](#) to Teammate Health to be considered compliant.

Failure to receive the flu vaccine or submit an exemption form or documentation will lead to the teammate's end of employment with Atrium Health. Refer to the [HR Policy 4.05 Infectious Diseases Prevention](#).

What types of vaccines are being offered this year?

There will be 2 types of vaccines offered this year and these vaccines are preservative-free:

- Intramuscular (IM)
- FluBlok (for teammates who have a severe allergy to eggs)

Other flu vaccine options may be available at each teammate's primary care provider. The CHS LiveWELL Health Plan covers preventative care at 100%, including flu vaccines. Although, if during the course of the office visit a condition is detected, additional tests are needed or the visit becomes diagnostic a charge will incur and a bill will be sent to you.

How long does the flu vaccination last; how long will I be covered?

Guidance from CDC is to get a flu vaccine now, if you haven't gotten one already this season. It's best to get vaccinated before flu begins spreading in your community. It takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body that protect against flu. CDC recommends that people get a flu vaccine by the end of October, if possible. Getting vaccinated later, however, can still be beneficial and vaccination should continue to be offered throughout the flu season, even into January or later.

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/keyfacts.htm>

If I obtain an exemption from the vaccine, but later change my mind, can I still get the vaccine?

If you submit a medical exemption you should follow your provider's advice.

If you have an existing religious exemption or a newly submitted one you can visit Teammate Health or any of the flu clinics to receive a flu vaccine free of charge at any time during the flu campaign (October 1 - November 9, 2018) and flu season. Check the [Flu PeopleConnect page](#) for a [schedule of clinics](#) or visit any [Teammate Health location](#).

Will there be a way to identify teammates who have taken the flu vaccine?

Teammates who receive the flu vaccine will be identified by a light teal sticker with a check mark and the campaign year. The sticker should be placed on their ID badge by the vaccine administrator. Teammates who have a magenta sticker from last year should remove it.

How do I receive a sticker if I get my vaccine from an outside retail pharmacy, my own provider, or outside of Atrium Health?

Teammates who receive their vaccine from an outside retail pharmacy or personal physician's office can obtain their sticker by providing documentation of receiving the vaccine to Teammate Health. Teammate Health will only accept the documentation (example: doctor's note, check out form, retail receipt) by submitting the documentation electronically through the [Influenza Exemption/Other Designation eForm](#) on PeopleConnect

Once you have provided the required confirmation of a flu vaccine from an outside retail pharmacy, an outside provider or your personal physician, Teammate Health will ensure you receive a sticker for your badge as quickly as possible.

How do I get a sticker if I receive my vaccine at an Atrium Health Medical Group location designated to administer the influenza vaccine?

Teammates who receive a vaccination at an Atrium Health Medical Group location will receive their sticker from designated flu champions at the time their vaccine is given.

Accountability with Annual Influenza Campaign

What happens if I do not take the vaccination?

Failure to receive the flu vaccine or submit an exemption form or documentation will lead to the teammate's end of employment with Atrium Health. Refer to the [HR Policy 4.05 Infectious Diseases Prevention](#).

Teammates who do not take the vaccination and have submitted a medical or religious exemption will be required to wear a surgical mask during the declared flu season. The consequence for failure to wear a surgical mask is the teammate being sent home and potential end of employment. Refer to [HR Policy 5.15 Team Member Counseling](#).

How can I make sure Teammate Health receives documentation for a vaccine I received outside of Atrium Health (doctor's office, pharmacy, retail location)?

Attach a copy of the flu vaccine receipt to the Influenza Exemption/Other Designation eForm. Teammate Health will only accept your proof by submitting it through the [Influenza Exemption/Other Designation eForm](#) on PeopleConnect.

Teammates can go to any Teammate Health location to obtain their sticker with proof noted in the database. In addition, teammate compliance is reported weekly on the Flu Compliance Report available to leaders.

How will data be tracked for compliance with the Influenza Campaign?

In an effort to promote 100 percent compliance for the safety of our patients, visitors and teammates, vaccinations and exemptions will be tracked. Tracking this information will allow us to determine what proportion of our staff are reached, offered vaccines, vaccinated, or exempted. **We encourage early compliance!**

Eligibility and Exemptions

Will non-employed healthcare personnel, students, volunteers, contract workers, and credentialed providers be eligible to receive a flu vaccine, free of charge?

Yes. Free flu vaccinations are available to students, volunteers, contract workers, and providers credentialed to practice at Atrium Health who have an Atrium Health identification badge. Teammates are required to show their Atrium Health identification badge to receive the vaccination.

Is anyone exempt from receiving the flu vaccination?

There may be some people who cannot take the flu vaccination because of a medical reason or religious belief. Teammates who are not able to take the vaccination for a medical reason must provide documentation and submit a [medical exemption form](#) to Teammate Health.

If you have a religious reason for not taking the flu vaccine and previously submitted a religious exemption form a new religious exemption form will not be required. If you are a new hire since last year's flu campaign and have a religious reason for not taking the flu vaccine you must submit a [religious exemption form](#) to Teammate Health to be considered compliant.

Teammates who are exempt also must wear a surgical mask within six feet of patients during the announced flu season.

How do I complete a medical or religious exemption?

You have the option of submitting a [medical](#) or [religious](#) exemption form or documentation. Teammates who cannot receive the vaccine for medical reasons must submit a [medical exemption form](#) or medical documentation. If you have a religious reason for not taking the flu vaccine and previously submitted a religious exemption form a new religious exemption form will not be required. If you are a new hire since last year's flu campaign and have a religious reason for not taking the flu vaccine you must submit a [religious exemption form](#) to Teammate Health to be considered compliant.

Teammate Health will only accept the exemption form by submitting it through the [Influenza Exemption/Other Designation eForm](#) on *PeopleConnect*.

Should pregnant teammates receive the flu vaccine?

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the American Academy of Family Physicians have recommended routine vaccination of all pregnant women. Pregnant women are at a particular risk for flu complications. Refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: www.cdc.gov/flu

Mask Requirement

Who is required to wear a mask?

Teammates who are working in the presence of patients (within 6 feet) who do not take the vaccination will be required to wear a surgical mask during the declared flu season. Teammates who are required to wear a mask, and who do not wear one, will be sent home. Further incidents of not wearing a mask may lead to end of employment. Refer to [HR Policy 5.15 Team Member Counseling](#) and [2018-2019 Seasonal Influenza Mask Policy](#).

What public areas within our facilities will teammates be exempt from wearing a mask?

Cafeterias, lobbies, elevators, parking decks and hallways are exempted areas.

Family Medical Leave (FMLA) and Vaccine Compliance

What happens if I am scheduled for a medical leave (FMLA) during the flu campaign or if a teammate is out on a medical leave during the campaign or season and returns during the campaign or season?

Teammates who are scheduled for FMLA are encouraged to receive their vaccine or submit an exemption prior to going on leave **for early compliance**.

If they are unable to comply with the flu policy prior to their leave, upon return from leave, the Human Resources Return to Work Program or Leave of Absence Administration will refer them to Teammate Health to complete compliance. If possible, teammates should be in compliance with the flu policy before returning to work. If not possible, teammates should be in compliance with the flu policy within 2 weeks of returning to work.

Will a doctor's note be required for a flu-related absence?

No, unless it is submitted with a request for a medical leave of absence.

Will a flu-related absence count as an occurrence?

Yes, unless the absence is submitted and approved as a leave of absence.

Flu Campaign vs. Flu Season

When is the flu campaign?

Monday, October 1, 2018 through Friday, November 9, 2018.

When will the flu season begin and end?

The influenza *season* will begin and end based on the medical evidence for our community, based on the number of visits for flu-related illness, confirmed by Catherine Passaretti, MD, Atrium Health epidemiologist.

Gary Little, MD, will announce and communicate the beginning and the end of the flu season to teammates. The mask requirement is in effect during the announced flu season.

The Influenza Exemption/Other Designation eForm

How should the Influenza Exemption/Other Designation eForm be used?

The *Influenza Exemption/Other Designation eForm* can be used for **two** reasons:

1. To upload your medical or religious exemption form or documentation AND;
2. To upload receipt/documentation of receiving the flu vaccine from your own provider, an outside retail pharmacy or other outside provider

When uploading a receipt/documentation it must be in PDF format.

It is extremely important that teammates use the eForm for an exemption AND to upload receipt/documentation of receiving the flu vaccine when visiting their own provider, an outside retail pharmacy or other outside provider. This is the only way flu documentation will be accepted.

The eForm automatically captures data to ensure reporting accuracy.

Where do I access the eForm?

The online [Influenza Exemption/Other Designation eForm](#) can be accessed from

- An Atrium Health computer by going to the [Flu PeopleConnect](#) page OR;
- Home by going to “Go Remote” or “PeopleConnect Remote”

How do I complete the eForm if I have an exemption form or documentation for an exemption?

- Upload and complete the [Influenza Exemption/Other Designation eForm](#) that can be accessed from work or from home
- All attachments, including the form or documentation must be in an electronic format

Flu education is provided and can be read before submitting the eForm.

How do I complete the eForm if I have a receipt or other documentation of getting the vaccine from an outside retail pharmacy, my own provider, or outside of Atrium Health?

Teammates who receive a flu vaccination from a location outside of Atrium Health may only submit their documentation through the [Influenza Exemption/Other Designation eForm](#) that can be accessed from work or from home. All attachments, including the form or documentation must be in an electronic format

The eForm automatically captures data to ensure reporting accuracy.

More information

Who do I contact with questions or more information?

For more information please:

- Visit the [Annual Flu Campaign PeopleConnect page](#) or PeopleConnect > Human Resources > Get Care Now > Teammate Health > Annual Flu Campaign
- Contact your leader or Workforce Relations representative(s) with any additional questions.
- Email questions to TeammateHealthFluInfo@AtriumHealth.org in Outlook