

I. POLICY

In accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS) requires members of the EVMS/EVMS Medical Group Community to be vaccinated annually against influenza. This policy outlines the requirements and procedures for vaccination, exemptions available, and any procedures for non-compliance.

II. DEFINITIONS

Healthcare Personnel means employees of EVMS/EVMS Medical Group, EVMS students, visiting students or other visiting trainees, temporary agency personnel, volunteers, and independent contractors who provide patient care services, work, conduct research in, and/or attend educational instruction, in Clinical Care Areas.

Clinical Care Areas means any areas where patients are seen, or may be waiting to be seen, by a healthcare provider, where interaction with human research subjects may occur, and/or other areas that may contain Other Potentially Infectious Material (OPIM) as defined by the CDC. This includes locations off the EVMS campus.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Mandatory Vaccinations.

1. As a condition of employment or educational program participation, all Healthcare Personnel must receive an annual influenza vaccination by the deadline date stipulated in the notice provided by Occupational Health pursuant to Section III(C), unless granted an exemption for medical contraindications or religious beliefs in accordance with Section IV of this Policy. Healthcare Personnel who assume positions after the vaccination deadline date will be required to receive an influenza vaccination at the time of hire unless granted an exemption or unless the requirement is otherwise waived by Occupational Health.

2. EVMS departments, divisions, and programs may establish more stringent standards requiring mandatory influenza vaccination for individuals who are not otherwise covered by this policy (e.g., Medical Surveillance Plan for individuals working directly with or around pathogenic organisms and/or lab animals in research laboratories). In such event, the department's standards must be submitted for review and approval by Occupational Health prior to implementing the standards.

3. Mandatory influenza vaccination requirements may be met by:

- a. Obtaining a vaccination from EVMS Occupational Health which is provided free of charge to all EVMS employees and students; or
- b. Providing acceptable proof of vaccination by another provider through the [EVMS VAX Portal](#).

4. In the event of an influenza vaccine shortage, EVMS will determine an appropriate distribution plan for the available vaccine. Influenza vaccine will be offered to personnel based on risk to patient population cared for, job function, and risk of exposure to influenza. Priority will be given to those who provide hands-on patient care with prolonged face-to-face contact with patients and/or have the highest risk of exposure to patients with influenza. Those who are prioritized to receive the vaccine will be held to the mandatory standard of this policy, while others will be excused from that standard for the duration of the vaccine shortage period.

B. Voluntary Vaccinations. EVMS strongly encourages all employees and students who are not Healthcare Personnel, to also receive influenza vaccination from EVMS.

C. Notice. Prior to the annual onset of influenza season and when the most current vaccination recommendations are published by the CDC, EVMS will inform individuals about (1) vaccination requirements; (2) dates when the vaccination is available; (3) procedures for receiving vaccination; (4) procedures for submitting written documentation of vaccination obtained outside of the school; (5) procedures for requesting an exemption; and (6) consequences of failing to obtain vaccination.

IV. EXEMPTIONS

A. Medical Exemption. Exemptions to mandatory vaccination may be granted based on certain medical contraindications to the influenza vaccine. Examples include a history or documented test indications of severe allergy to the vaccine or its components and a history of Guillain-Barré syndrome. Any Healthcare Personnel seeking a medical exemption must submit an “EVMS Influenza Vaccination Exemption Request Form” and supporting documentation by the deadline date stipulated in the notice provided by Occupational Health pursuant to Section III(C). Medical exemptions for employees must be submitted to Occupational Health; medical exemptions for students must be submitted to Student Health. Medical exemptions are valid only for the flu season in which they are granted.

B. Religious or Disabilities Exemption. Healthcare Personnel may be entitled to an exemption from a mandatory vaccination requirement based on a disability that prevents safe vaccination, or on religious grounds. Religious or disability-related exemptions for employees (faculty, residents and staff) must be requested by using [AbsenceTracker](#). Religious exemptions for employees must be submitted to Human Resources; religious exemptions for students must be submitted to Student

Affairs. Students may request an exemption by completing the Influenza Vaccination Exemption Request Form on the EVMS website at [Influenza Vaccination Exemption Request](#). Requests for exemptions must be received prior to the deadline date stipulated in the notice provided by Occupational Health pursuant to Section III(C). Human Resources or Student Affairs, as appropriate, will review the requests and send a copy of the final approval or denial to EVMS Occupational Health. Religious and disability-related exemptions are valid only for the flu season in which granted.

C. Infection Control for Exempt Individuals. For the safety of patients and others during influenza season, Healthcare Personnel who are granted an exemption will be required to wear a surgical or isolation mask when entering patient care or clinical care areas. In some cases, the Healthcare Personnel may be denied access to certain patient care or clinical areas.

D. Denial of exemption. In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to deny a requested exemption where the Occupational Health Medical Director, in consultation with EVMS Medical Group and EVMS Human Resources, has determined that performance of the Healthcare Personnel's duties without vaccination would pose a business interruption or require substantial alterations to essential job or program requirements that cannot be met by EVMS.

V. VACCINATION COMPLIANCE/INFLUENZA CONTROL

A. Healthcare Personnel who are students and who fail to receive an influenza vaccination or exemption by the established deadline will be required to wear a mask while in patient care areas and will be reported to Student Affairs for appropriate disciplinary action. In some cases, the student may not be allowed to have patient interaction during the influenza season, which may impact the student's academic progress.

B. EVMS Personnel who are faculty, residents or staff who fail to receive an influenza vaccination or exemption by the established deadline will be reported to Human Resources for corrective action and employees working in patient care areas may be required to wear a mask. Continued non-compliance will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

C. For the safety of patients and others, all individuals (including those who have received an influenza vaccination and those who have received an exemption) who contract influenza will be subject to the EVMS Communicable Disease Policy and will be expected to remain home from work for time periods as determined by EVMS Occupational Health.

VI. QUESTIONS

Questions regarding the administration or applicability of this Policy should be directed to EVMS Occupational Health at 757-446-5870.