

I. POLICY

In accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations, Eastern Virginia Medical School (EVMS) requires members of the EVMS 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

EVMS Personnel– employees of EVMS, EVMS students, visiting students or other visiting trainees, temporary agency personnel, volunteers, and independent contractors.

III. PROCEDURES

A. Mandatory Vaccinations.

1. As a condition of employment or educational program participation all EVMS 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. EVMS 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. 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 to EVMS Occupational Health that an influenza vaccination was provided by another provider.

3. Once vaccinated, all EVMS Personnel will be provided with an identifier for the current influenza season that must be displayed on the individual's ID badge.

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. 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 EVMS 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 are valid only for the flu season in which they are granted.

B. Religious Exemption. Exemptions to mandatory vaccination may be granted based on sincerely held religious beliefs, practices, or observances. EVMS Personnel seeking a religious exemption must submit an “EVMS Influenza Vaccination Exemption Request Form” and any requested documentation by the deadline date stipulated in the notice provided by Occupational Health pursuant to Section III(C). Religious exemptions are valid only for the flu season in which they are granted. All requests for religious exemptions by EVMS Personnel will be reviewed by the Associate Dean for Student Affairs or by Human Resources, as applicable. Human Resources or the Associate Dean, as appropriate, will send a copy of the final approval or denial to EVMS Occupational Health.

C. Infection Control for Exempt Individuals. For the safety of patients and others during influenza season, EVMS 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 EVMS Personnel may be denied access to certain patient care or clinical areas. For students, denied access to patient care may impact academic progress.

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 EVMS 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. EVMS Personnel who are students and who fail to receive an influenza vaccination or exemption by the established deadline will be reported to the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and will be required to wear a mask while in patient care areas. In some cases, the student may

not be allowed to have patient interaction during the influenza season.

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.