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Applicability: St. Lawrence Health System
 Wide Content

COVID-19 Vaccine Policy

PURPOSE

SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) is the strain of coronavirus that has spread throughout the United States, significantly impacting everyone in all walks of life. This disease has changed many of our “normal practices” and initially resulted in severe restrictions to our care delivery operations. St. Lawrence Health System (SLHS) has developed the **Employee COVID-19 Vaccination Program** plan with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the New York State Department of Health (NYS DOH). The primary purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the implementation of the Employee COVID-19 Vaccination Program. Proper execution of this policy will allow SLHS to seek to reduce the ability of COVID-19 to spread and impact our workforce and patient populations.

SCOPE

All St. Lawrence Health System (SLHS) affiliate entities and all workforce and non-workforce members including, but not limited to, physicians, contractors, and volunteers.

POLICY

It is the intent of this policy to prevent transmission of COVID-19 between patients and healthcare personnel (HCP). HCP related to this policy, shall include all persons employed or affiliated with SLHS, whether paid or unpaid. This includes but is not limited to employees, members of the medical and nursing staff, contract staff, students, and volunteers, who engage in activities such that if they were infected with COVID-19, they could potentially expose patients or our workforce to the disease. For licensed professionals, failure to adhere to Infection Prevention standards is considered professional misconduct in New York State. SLHS's discipline policies will be utilized to enforce this practice.

It is the responsibility of Administration, Department Managers, Supervisors and **ALL** healthcare personnel to enforce compliance with this policy.

Workforce who receive a vaccination shall not be excluded from any current Infection Prevention or COVID-19 personal protective equipment policies or procedures. For clarity, it is the expectation that all members of the workforce continue to adhere to the current Infection Prevention or COVID-19 personal protective policies and procedures regardless of their vaccination status.

"Pandemic," for the purposes of this policy, shall mean the period of time during which COVID-19 is prevalent as determined by NYS DOH. The end date is subject to change pending the COVID-19 prevalence in the

geographic area.

The Employee COVID-19 Vaccination Program will be implemented in three phases based on the anticipated levels of supply and demand. Each phase targets different priority groups, engages different key partners, and employs different vaccination strategies. The phased approach is a flexible framework that can be adjusted to different supply level scenarios. The three phases are generally defined as follows:

- **Phase 1: Limited Doses Available.** Focus will be on the workforce in the main hospitals and urgent care settings that have direct patient contact with high exposure to COVID-19.
- **Phase 2: Larger Number of Doses Available.** Supply Likely to Meet Demand – other workers essential to the COVID-19 response, other inpatient care and outpatient clinic settings.
- **Phase 3: Likely Sufficient Supply.** Slowing Demand – all members of the workforce.

Once available, all HCP will be offered the COVID-19 vaccine at no cost or must sign a Declination form. (Students and Interns may provide their own vaccination). If a HCP has a medical exemption, proper documentation from their provider must be brought to Occupational Health to keep on file. The HCP will have the option to change their decision at any time again at no cost to them.

Occupational Health will maintain COVID-19 vaccination documentation of all personnel in their file. For the purposes of vaccine inventory control, including ordering, administration, and reporting, any HCP eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, who has refused vaccination, either temporarily or indefinitely, but has not yet signed a Declination form, shall be deemed to have declined and will be instructed to complete a Declination consent form as soon as reasonably possible.

PROCEDURE

For the purpose of this policy all SLHS employees will be subject to this policy, while on duty, if present in any off-site clinic, SLHS office, or within the hospital itself. The only time a mask does not need to be worn is during an employee's unpaid meal break, while in an established staff break room or the hospital cafeteria.

Related Policies, Documents, & Forms

- [Discipline Policy](#)
- [Universal Mask Wearing Policy](#)
- [COVID-19 Infection Prevention - Standard Precautions - Transmission-based Isolation](#)
- [COVID-19 Staff Screening, Potential COVID-19 Staff Exposure, and Confirmed Staff Cases](#)
- [COVID-19 Employee Toolkit](#)

Attachments

No Attachments

Approval Signatures

Approver

Date

Jeremy Slaga: Chief Administrative Officer 1/20/2021

Applicability

Canton-Potsdam Hospital, Gouverneur Hospital, Massena Hospital, St. Lawrence Health System

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