



City of Newport News
HUMAN RESOURCES
COVID-19 Fully Vaccinated FAQs-#16

Please note the guidance provided in this or any previous edition of FAQs is subject to change based on the most up-to-date information provided by the Department of Labor, Centers for Disease Control and/or Virginia Department of Health. This edition covers Vaccination FAQs.

Q: What does it mean to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19?

A: *Employees are considered fully vaccinated:*

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer or Moderna vaccines); or*
- 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, (Johnson & Johnson Janssen vaccine)*

*If it has been less than 2 weeks since your final vaccine dose, you are **NOT** fully protected. Please continue following all prevention steps and safety protocols.*

Q: If I am fully vaccinated, do I still need to follow the safety protocols?

A: *We are still learning how vaccines will affect the spread of COVID-19. While we encourage all eligible employees to receive the vaccine, every employee must continue to follow the safety protocols as established by the City of Newport News and the Governor's Executive Order 63 and 67, which include face coverings in public, social distancing and enhanced personal hygiene. The fact is, while the vaccine is ~95% effective in preventing COVID-19, vaccinated individuals can still carry and transmit the virus to others. Continuing to follow safety protocols is a must to prevent exposure and spread of the virus.*

Q: If I am fully vaccinated, do I need to quarantine if I am around someone who has or is suspected to have COVID?

A: *Employees who meet the following criteria **do not** need to quarantine.*

- Someone who has been fully vaccinated and shows no symptoms of COVID-19.*

Or:

- Someone who has tested positive within the previous 3 months **and***
- Has recovered **and***
- Remains without COVID-19 symptoms (for example, cough, shortness of breath)*

Employees who do not meet the above criteria will be required to complete a 10-day quarantine. Employees may telework, if teleworking opportunities are available. The employee may return to work early if the suspected positive person receives a negative COVID-19 test result. The employee must also be fever (without the use of fever reducing medications) and symptom free for at least 24 hours prior to returning to work.

COVID-19 FAQs

Q: If I am fully vaccinated and experiencing COVID like symptoms, should I quarantine?

A: *Although the risk that fully vaccinated employees could become infected with COVID-19 is low, any employee, regardless of their vaccination status, who experiences symptoms consistent with COVID-19 will be required to refrain from coming in to work until a medical diagnosis is received or until the employee is fever or symptom free for at least 24 hours (without the use of any fever reducing medications) prior to returning. If you are not feeling well, you are encouraged to stay home.*

Q: If I tested positive for COVID within the past 3 months and have been in close contact with someone who has COVID, should I quarantine?

A: *Employees who have tested positive for COVID within the past 3 months and recovered do not have to quarantine or get tested again, as long as they do not develop new symptoms. Employees who develop symptoms again within 3 months of their first bout of COVID-19 may need to be re-tested if there is no other cause identified for their symptoms.*

Q: What happens if I decide to travel? Will I be required to quarantine?

A: *Travel increases your chances of getting and spreading COVID-19. The CDC recommends that you do not travel at this time. Delaying travel and staying home helps protect you and others from COVID-19. All employees, regardless of vaccination status, will be required to quarantine following any high-risk travel or high-risk activity. Employees who are tested for COVID-19 within 3-5 days after travel will still be required to quarantine, even with a negative test result.*

High Risk Travel – Travel via mass transportation (bus, train, and airplane) or Level 3 Travel Advisory (per CDC)

High Risk Activity – Participation in any of the higher risk activities **

Employees will be required to telework if available or determine if an isolated with PPE work assignment is available; if neither option is available, employees will quarantine for 10 days using PML for any missed time.*

**Employees choosing to travel high risk or participate in a high-risk activity may have limits to telework and isolated work assignment based on needs of the department and management. Overuse or abuse of high-risk situations may require employees to forfeit this option.*

***Going to a large social gathering like a wedding, funeral, or party. Attending a mass gathering like a sporting event, concert, or parade. Being in crowds like in restaurants, bars, fitness centers, or movie theaters. Taking public transportation like planes, trains, or buses, or being in transportation hubs like airports. Traveling on a cruise ship or riverboat.*

Deviations from protocol may occur with Public Safety and mission critical infrastructure personnel or personnel required to travel for city business.

COVID-19 FAQs

Q: If I test negative for COVID and my physician recommends that I continue to quarantine, will I be able to use PHE or EPSL to cover the days I miss work?

A: *Once a negative COVID diagnosis has been received, you must discontinue the use of PHE/EPSL and switch to utilizing accrued leave (PML/PPL) or Comp time to cover absences from work.*

Q: Once I have completed my quarantine am I cleared to return to work?

A: *Once an employee has successfully completed their quarantine period the employee may return to work. The employee must be symptom and fever free for at least 24 hours prior to returning.*

Q: If I receive the vaccine and suffer from one or more of the side effects, will I be able to use PHE or EPSL to cover my absences from work?

A: *If you suffer from any side effect that is similar to a COVID-19 symptom or do not feel well, you should stay home and either telework (if applicable) or take accrued leave (PPL/PML) or Comp time. You will not be able to use PHE or EPSL for side effects. If you are sick, STAY HOME.*

Q: Am I required to get the COVID-19 Vaccine?

A: *While we would encourage all eligible and able employees to be vaccinated, it is not mandatory for any employee.*

Q: Why have some employees been vaccinated at the Newport News co-sponsored clinic and others have not?

A: *In January, the City began utilizing Governor Northam's 1B priority list to outline the scheduling order of departments and specific employees who choose to receive the vaccine.*

- *Vaccine allocations are being split between all partner agencies, state and federal partners, private schools and other designated 1B populations*
- *The Newport News clinic is operating once a week, on average, based on weekly vaccine allocation*
- *As we move forward through our final vaccination phases, eligible employees will continue to receive invitations for vaccination clinic opportunities*