



City of Newport News
HUMAN RESOURCES
COVID-19 FAQs #18



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 Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated employees and Governor's [Executive Order 79](#).

SPECIAL NOTICE:

It is recommended and expected that each employee continue to take personal responsibility for protecting themselves, families and co-workers. Nothing contained herein precludes any employee from wearing a face covering and adhering to sanitation protocols going forward, however, there are certain positions, circumstances, and job duties that require employees to wear face coverings and/or appropriate PPE.

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: Now that the Governor has lifted some of the restrictions for Virginia, when will the city adopt some of these changes?

A: Effective midnight May 28, 2021, the city will adopt all changes related to the ending of Commonsense Public Health Restrictions due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19), in accordance with the [Governor's Executive Order 79](#).

Q: If I am fully vaccinated, am I still required to wear a mask every day?

A: Masks are a critical tool in protecting yourself and others until you are fully vaccinated. It is our expectation that each employee will continue to take responsibility for protecting themselves, their families and co-workers. All employees may choose to continue wearing a mask in any City facility or work location.

*Effective midnight on May 28, 2021, **fully vaccinated** individuals who are working in **low-risk positions**, as defined by the [VOSH Final Permanent Standards pg 11-15](#), may remove their face coverings in the workplace **at their discretion and** in accordance with the Virginia Occupational Safety and Health (VOSH) Permanent Emergency Standards for COVID-19.*

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Employees working in Very High, High, or Medium-risk positions should continue to wear face coverings and appropriate PPE when in very high, high or medium risk situations.

Departments should continue to follow standard DOL Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Standards applicable for their departments when employees are working in these particular situations. [VOSH Final Permanent Standards](#)

*Employees **not fully vaccinated** should continue to wear face coverings while in city facilities or on city business.*

Q: When I arrive to work, am I required to get my temperature checked and answer COVID related questions?

A: *Effective midnight on May 28, 2021 employees will no longer be required to pre-screen prior to starting their shift. Employees are strongly encouraged to self-monitor for symptoms prior to coming to work. If you are sick don't come to work. Existing free-standing temperature screening stations will remain in place for those who voluntarily want to check their temperature prior to their start of shift.*

Q: Currently we have a requirement to remain six feet apart from one another in the elevators and in the workplace; does this still apply?

A: *Effective midnight on May 28, 2021, there will no longer be capacity restrictions or social distancing requirements. Departments are encouraged to exercise discretion in the use of internal office spaces and meeting locations or activities involving in-person attendance.*

Q: If I am fully vaccinated, do I need to quarantine if I travel?

A: *Fully vaccinated travelers are less likely to get and spread COVID-19. However, international travel poses additional risks and even fully vaccinated travelers are at increased risk for getting and possibly spreading new COVID-19 variants. Fully vaccinated employees may travel within the United States and internationally **without** a post-travel self-quarantine as long as they continue to take COVID-19 precautions while traveling – wearing a mask, avoiding crowds, socially distancing, and washing hands frequently. The CDC recommends delaying all travel (domestic and international) until you are fully vaccinated.*

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Updated

Q: Will I be required to provide proof of my vaccination status before high risk personal travel to avoid having to self-quarantine prior to returning to work?

A: *Yes. Fully vaccinated employees must display to their supervisor proof of their vaccination status prior to any high risk travel or high risk personal activities. **The Vaccination Record must include the employee's name, product name/manufacturer for each dose, lot # for each dose, and the date each dose was administered to the employee.** Employees may also provide their My Chart vaccine record in lieu of the actual vaccine card. **Supervisors will not maintain any copies of your documentation.***

Employees who are unable to provide this documentation or who are not fully vaccinated prior to high risk personal traveling or participating in high risk personal activities will be required to quarantine for 10 days prior to returning to work. These employees will be directed to utilize accrued leave in accordance with city policy. Non-vaccinated employees may not telework during isolation and are required to use accrued leave on any day outside of their regular telework schedule. 100% teleworking as a result of a high risk after-travel quarantine will no longer be option for employees who do not have an existing teleworking arrangement.

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

High Risk Activity - Going to a large social gathering like a wedding, funeral, or party. Attending a mass gathering like a sporting event, concert, or parade. Taking public transportation like planes, trains, or buses, or being in transportation hubs like airports. Traveling on a cruise ship or riverboat.

Updated

Q: What is the travel guidance for unvaccinated employees or employees who are not fully vaccinated but desire to participate in personal high risk travel?

A: *The CDC's existing guidance for people who are not fully vaccinated has not changed. The CDC discourages non-essential travel both domestic and internationally by those who are not fully vaccinated. Employees who are not fully vaccinated prior to traveling high risk or participating in high risk activities will have the following options:*

- *Delay travel until you are fully vaccinated*
- *Quarantine using your own PPL/PML for 10 days following travel*

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*Employees who are unvaccinated or who are **not** fully vaccinated prior to high risk personal traveling or participating in high risk personal activities will be required to quarantine for 10 days prior to returning to work. These employees will be directed to utilize accrued leave in accordance with city policy. Unvaccinated employees or those employees who are not fully vaccinated may not telework during isolation and are required to use accrued leave on any day outside of their regular telework schedule. 100% teleworking as a result of a high-risk after-travel quarantine will no longer be option for employees who do not have an existing teleworking arrangement.*

Employees who are unvaccinated or are not fully vaccinated and choose to travel internationally will still be required to quarantine, even if they test 3-5 days after travel and receive a negative test result per CDC guidelines.

Updated

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. 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.

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: When will Business Travel resume for the city?

A: *Requests for Business travel will be approved on a case by case basis by the City Manager's Office. Departments are encouraged to seek out conferences that offer a hybrid or virtual arrangement for fiscal year 2022. Note: The city did not budget for travel in the FY22 Budget.*

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Q: How long will Liberal Leave remain in effect?

A: Liberal Leave will expire at midnight on June 30, 2021.

Q: Are there any restrictions on meetings, trainings and in-person events?

A: Effective midnight on May 28, 2021, there will no longer be capacity restrictions or social distancing requirements. Departments are encouraged to exercise discretion in the use of internal office spaces and meeting locations or activities involving in-person attendance.

Q: How long will I be able to apply for Emergency Sick Leave or Emergency Childcare Leave?

A: Effective midnight on June 30, 2021, the city's Pandemic Coronavirus Policy will sunset. Employees with a non-occupational COVID related absence after the policy expires will be advised to utilize accrued leave in accordance with city policy. Requests for Emergency Paid Sick Leave and Emergency Childcare Leave will no longer be accepted after our June 30, 2021 deadline. All current approvals will expire on June 30, 2021.

Q: If I have a COVID related question who should I contact?

A: The COVID Care Team is available to assist with COVID related questions through midnight on June 30, 2021. Employees who experience a COVID related medical situation after that date will be directed to their respective department or medical services for guidance on managing quarantine and absence situations.

Q: How do I make an appointment to get vaccinated?

A: COVID-19 remains a serious risk to unvaccinated employees, and we encourage all employees to get their vaccination as soon as possible. Employees and citizens may locate vaccination clinic information for the Sherwood Clinic or other local vaccination clinics by visiting [VaccineFinder - Find COVID-19 vaccine locations near you](#). VaccineFinder is updated daily and works with partners such as clinics, pharmacies and health departments to provide accurate and up-to-date information about vaccination services. VaccineFinder will provide a link to schedule the appointment through the location's website or with a phone number to call to make an appointment.

Additional Resources from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- [Domestic Travel During COVID-19](#)
- [International Travel During COVID-19](#)
- [Final Permanent Standard for Infectious Disease Prevention of Sars-CoV-2 Virus that Causes COVID-19](#)
- [Executive Orders and Directives in effect for VA](#)
- [VaccineFinder - Find COVID-19 vaccine locations near you](#)