



SJC Safe at Work Plan Addendum to the Vaccination Plan: Booster Shot Program October 2021

Background

In May 2021, the SJC Safe at Work Plan was enhanced to include the COVID-19 vaccination requirement for all faculty and staff. This was done to protect the health and safety of the community and those individuals who are considered high risk, and it was implemented as a condition of employment. Exemptions for medical reasons and sincerely held religious beliefs were made available as exceptions to this requirement.

It was communicated that all non-exempted faculty and staff needed to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by July 1, 2021. Full vaccination has meant two Pfizer or Moderna shots, or the single Johnson & Johnson shot, plus two weeks. At the time when this requirement was established, the possibility of booster shots was on the distant horizon.

Update

On September 27, 2021, the CDC issued guidance on the eligibility of the COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Shot. These booster shots are available for the following Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine recipients who completed their initial series at least 6 months ago:

- 65 years and older
- 18+ who have underlying medical conditions
- 18+ who work in high-risk settings
- 18+ who live in high-risk settings

The CDC guidance states that people aged 18–64 years may be at increased risk for COVID-19 exposure and transmission because of **occupational** or **institutional setting** and may get a booster shot of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. This includes adults aged 18–64 years who work or reside in certain settings (e.g., health care, schools) since there is an increased risk of COVID-19 exposure and spreading where they work or reside.

Booster Shot Requirement

On September 29, 2021, the College Pandemic Response Team communicated the booster requirement to all non-exempted faculty, staff and students. Saint Joseph's College is requiring boosters to sustain full immunity of individual students, faculty and staff, as well as community immunity to protect everyone's health and safety within our College community.

As a result of the PRT's decision and in alignment with the SJC Safe at Work Plan, the Booster Shot Program has been established as an addendum to the Vaccination

Plan. Although the decision for the booster shot requirement is primarily due to the increased risk of COVID-19 exposure and transmission within our institutional setting, and the occupational setting of several employed positions by the College, it directly supports SJC's commitment to the health and safety of our workforce as well as our students who live and learn within our community. Finally, the Booster Shot Program further demonstrates the College's unwavering dedication to community health since it covers all non-exempted faculty and staff who are employed by the College.

Beginning in October 2021, COVID-19 boosters are required for all faculty and staff excluding those who currently have approved exemptions. This requirement is being implemented on a rolling basis as boosters become available, and as the list of recommended recipients expands.

The initial rollout of Booster Shots at SJC is for the Pfizer-BioNTech booster. At this time, the Pfizer-BioNTech booster authorization only applies to people whose primary series was the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.

The Process

In order for faculty and staff to meet this booster requirement and maintain a fully vaccinated status at SJC, the SJC Health & Wellness Center will reach out to eligible faculty and staff via email notifying those who need to obtain the booster within the next 30-day period. In this case eligibility means that: 1). the appropriate booster shots are available; and, 2). the vaccine recipients have completed their initial series at least 6 months ago.

Once faculty and staff are officially notified by the SJC Health & Wellness Center, there are two options for obtaining the booster shot:

1. The SJC Health and Wellness Center is administering the booster shots free of charge. Hourly employees will be compensated for time spent to get the booster shot. Appointments are required and can be made by going to <https://sjc-health.titaniumhwc.com/>. The employee needs to bring the vaccination card to the appointment so that it may be properly updated to reflect the booster shot.
 - Note: it is crucial that the employee attend his/her scheduled appointment or reschedule it in advance if necessary. If the vaccines are not used within a few hours after preparation, they cannot be used at all, and this valuable medication will be wasted.
2. An employee may elect to have a licensed healthcare provider or facility administer the booster shot. This option is provided for all employees who live at a distance from campus, are unable to come to campus, or who choose to use another provider. Once your booster shot is administered, the employee will be required to upload the documentation through the Health and Wellness Center's [encrypted Google form](#).

If an employee experiences side effects after receiving the COVID-19 booster, please stay home and rest. Notify your manager/supervisor of your need to be out of work due to side effects causing you to be unable to work (include the date,

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time, and duration). Your manager/supervisor will notify Human Resources of this additional time needed and will be advised of next steps for recording time away. Time off for this reason will not be charged to Maine Earned Paid Leave (MEPL) or Earned Time.

In the event that an employee's adverse reaction to the booster continues and is extensive, SJC will follow all OSHA requirements and procedures. This includes supporting employees having to take one or more days off of work, receive medical treatment beyond first aid, or the like as per the OSHA 29 CFR 1904.7 standard. OSHA specifically describes the issue of mandating employee vaccination, and states that any adverse reactions that an employee experiences after being required to receive the vaccine will automatically classify as work related. As a result, SJC will need to be notified by employees of any extensive adverse reactions in order to follow proper procedures and monitor any further employee reactions to the vaccine. Any employee who experiences an adverse reaction should contact their manager who will then work with Heidi Jacques in Human Resources.

Moving Forward

According to the CDC, people in the recommended groups who got the Moderna or J&J/Janssen vaccine will likely need a booster shot as well. The CDC will keep the public informed with a timely plan for Moderna and J&J/Janssen booster shots. Once this information is available, the Pandemic Response Team will provide an update to the community on the roll out plan for the Moderna and J&J/Janssen booster shots for non-exempted faculty and staff.

Non-Compliance

Saint Joseph's College is upholding the requirement that all faculty and staff be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 including the booster shot based on when it becomes available in relation to the employee's original vaccination date. Only those exempted for the vaccination due to a medical reason or sincerely held religious belief that is approved by Human Resources will be excused from this requirement.

The Health & Wellness Center will continue to track vaccination and booster shot activity relative to this requirement. This office will notify Human Resources of any outstanding matters involving faculty and staff not following through on the booster requirement for appropriate follow-up action.

Faculty and staff who are not exempted from this vaccination requirement and who decline to receive the booster, will not be authorized to work and will be subject to additional consequences, up to and including termination of employment.

Conclusion

Thank you for your continued commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy community at Saint Joseph's College and doing your part to boost community immunity!