

COVID-19 Bulletin

 Southcoast Health

Exclusively for the employees
of Southcoast Health

November 15, 2021

Greetings, Southcoast Colleagues.

In this Bulletin, you will find the following:

- **Change in protocol for Flu and COVID-19 vaccine stickers on ID badges**
- **Change in testing requirements for partially vaccinated employees**
- **REMINDER: Daily attestation**

Please scroll through the entire Bulletin for these updates, and be sure to visit Southcoast's [COVID-19 Employee Hub](#).

Thank you.

Change in protocol for Flu and COVID-19 vaccine stickers on ID badges

Many years back, the Flu Vaccine sticker program was put into place when employees and providers were required to wear a mask (covering their nose and mouth) if they were not able to get the Flu Vaccine. At that time, it was important to identify those who were not vaccinated so we could ensure that they were wearing the required mask – protecting themselves, colleagues, patients and visitors. Now that we are all required to be masked, We WILL NO Longer be giving out ID badge stickers to employees that show proof of Flu or COVID-19 vaccination.

In addition, it will not be necessary to display vaccination status on ID badges, so all employees are free to remove Flu and/or COVID-19 Vaccine stickers. Should mandatory masking be removed by DPH, we may need to revisit this sticker program.

Please remember – ensuring the health and safety of patients, visitors and each other is an important responsibility we all share. In addition to masking and other safety protocols, vaccination is a critical part of our helping to keep everyone safe from the COVID-19 virus. The step to require vaccination was made with the scientific understanding we have of the virus and the vaccine and only after very careful consideration. Since Southcoast made the decision to require vaccination, this action was further supported by the federal government's recently announced requirement that all health care workers be fully vaccinated by January 4, 2022.

Change in testing requirements for partially vaccinated employees

As of Tuesday, Nov. 16, employees who have not yet been fully vaccinated must be tested once weekly. This is a change in the initial requirement to be tested twice weekly. The change was made to ensure that we have enough resources for testing patients and residents of the community.

This change, to once weekly testing, only affects employees who have had the first dose of a two-dose vaccination and have not received the required second dose of the mRNA vaccine (Moderna, Pfizer). Any employee who has an approved exemption and has not had any dose of a COVID-19 vaccine is subject to twice weekly testing.

Remember, employees requiring weekly testing must get tested through Southcoast Health. Employees cannot go to any outside laboratory for testing because of our inability to track testing compliance through Employee Health.

Employee testing is available at the testing trailer at each hospital. An appointment is not needed. When you arrive, please tell the valet you are here for employee vaccine-related testing. You will be instructed on where to park

and be given next steps. On Tuesday, Nov. 16, the hours of operation will be posted on **Southcoast's public website:** [COVID-19 Vaccination Information](#).

REMINDER: Daily attestation requirement

It is important for all employees to complete the daily attestation on COVID-19 risk and symptoms. We periodically update the questions based on changes in requirements and risk, so please be sure to read each question carefully and be alert to any changes. It only takes a few moments to answer the questions, but they are important to keeping our facilities safe and the risk of viral transmission low.

Thank you, and be well.