

COVID-19 Bulletin

 Southcoast Health

Exclusively for the employees
of Southcoast Health

February 17, 2022

Greetings, Southcoast Colleagues.

In this Bulletin, you will find the following:

- **UPDATED masking policy for employees in non-hospital, non-clinical business locations**
- **Add an extra layer of protection – Get boosted!**
- **At-home COVID-19 test kits available at Southcoast pharmacies**
- **STATUS REPORT: COVID-19 cases**

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

Thank you.

UPDATED masking policy for employees in non-hospital, non-clinical business locations

Employees working in non-clinical business locations (locations where patient services are not provided) are no longer required to wear a mask if “up to date” on vaccination. For the vast majority of employees, this means vaccinated **and** boosted. See below on what it means to be “up to date.”

Employees with an approved vaccination exemption, however, must continue to mask at all locations. Employees with exemptions must also continue to be tested twice weekly.

Masking is still required for employees and visitors entering or working at any clinical location, hospital grounds, including the White Home and Elizabeth House, or any other location where patient services are provided.

What does it mean to be “up to date” on vaccination?

Up to date means one of the following:

1. You have received the initial series of the Pfizer (2 doses), Moderna (2 doses), or J&J (1 dose) vaccines **and** you have received a booster shot, if eligible.

Adults are **eligible to receive a booster** shot:

- 5 months after the second shot in a Moderna or Pfizer series, or
- 2 months after a single dose of J & J.

This applies to the vast majority of Southcoast employees.

Full details: [Stay Up to Date with Your Vaccines | CDC](#)

2. Immunocompromised individuals who have received initial 3 dose or 2 dose series and a booster:

- **Pfizer/Moderna:** Original two injections plus 3rd dose, followed by a booster (for a total of 4 doses) at least 3 months after the 3rd dose.
- **J & J:** Original one injection plus 2nd dose at least 28 days after the first injection, followed by a booster (for a total of 3 doses) at least 2 months after the 2nd dose.

Full details [here](#).

3. You have received the initial vaccine series, but you are not yet eligible to receive a booster shot. **However, once you are eligible, if you don't receive a booster, you must wear a mask.**

Individuals who are not “**up to date**” with COVID vaccination (as defined above), **must quarantine post-exposure** for 5 days and may continue to work during their quarantine period provided they remain asymptomatic, they do not care for immunocompromised individuals and the appropriate PPE is utilized.

Note: Updated guidance from the CDC states that it is no longer necessary to delay COVID-19 vaccination following receipt of monoclonal antibodies or convalescent plasma. Therefore, employees who had prior infection with COVID-19 or received this treatment should get vaccinated or boosted when eligible, as long as they are asymptomatic and have completed the required isolation period.

Add an extra layer of protection – Get boosted!

Spring is approaching and summer is just around the corner. With COVID cases declining, we're looking and hoping for all of us to have a good summer with minimal cases in our hospitals and plenty of outdoor enjoyment. Though we're trending in a very good direction, let's not let our guard down against this wily virus. Let's make sure the spring and summer seasons are more like the ones we had before the pandemic hit. **Add that extra layer of protection by getting boosted, even if you've recently had COVID!**

Studies show that after getting vaccinated against COVID-19, protection against the virus and the ability to prevent infection with variants may decrease over time. Additionally, a booster strengthens immunity even among those who have had COVID.

Help maximize everyone's health and safety and give us all the best chance for return to life as we once knew it. Please get boosted – for your colleagues, your family and yourself.

Go [here](#) for the latest employee vaccine clinic schedule. No appointment needed! Please complete the consent via the link below in advance of arriving: <https://southcoastapps.southcoast.org/covidform>.

At-home COVID-19 test kits available at Southcoast pharmacies

We are expanding the number of at-home test kits employees may purchase at Southcoast Retail Pharmacies (at St. Luke's, Charlton, Fairhaven).

Employees are no longer limited to buying only one test kit. The public may also purchase these at-home test kits as well.

If you have health insurance coverage, please show your health plan ID card or prescription ID card at time of purchase. Depending on the provision and limitations of your health insurance plan, you may have no out-of-pocket cost.

You may wish to use an at-home test kit when you plan to be in contact with an immune compromised or otherwise vulnerable person outside of the healthcare setting, if you are exposed and asymptomatic, or if you are planning to travel.

STATUS REPORT: COVID-19 cases

As of midday, we have 25 patients who have tested positive for COVID-19 hospitalized across our system – with 5 positive cases in ICU. In addition, we have 15 PUI hospitalized across our system – with 1 PUI in ICU.

COVID-19 daily dashboards, generated by the Southcoast Analytics Team, are available [here](#).

Thank you, and be well.