



## Thompson-Markward Hall

### **COVID-19 Vaccination Policy for Residents and Staff**

The TMH Board of Trustees recognizes its responsibility to ensure that TMH is free of recognized hazards for residents and employees. Therefore, in response to requests and concerns from residents and staff, the TMH Board has decided to move forward with a *mandatory* vaccination policy. This policy is intended to maximize the protection afforded by the COVID-19 vaccine. The goal of this program is to protect residents, employees, visitors, and others affiliated with TMH and the broader community from serious illness or death associated with the spread of the COVID-19 virus. This policy is intended to follow all state and local laws. It is based upon guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and public health and licensing authorities, as applicable. Below is vaccination policy along with additional clarifying information. TMH's existing COVID policies can be found on the TMH website at <https://tmhdc.org>.

- Effective November 15, one must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 in order to live or work at TMH in any capacity.
- TMH will follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) definition of "fully vaccinated for COVID-19," and the TMH vaccination policy will be revised as the definition of "fully vaccinated" is updated.
- The CDC considers a person fully vaccinated for COVID-19 when two weeks have passed after receiving the second shot of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, or two weeks have passed after the single-dose Johnson & Johnson (J&J) vaccine.
- If a resident and/or employee was vaccinated outside of the United States, information regarding the country's dosing protocols must be submitted for review by the executive director.
- Residents and/or staff must provide proof of vaccination to the executive director or her designate. This must include the following information: a copy of one's COVID-19 vaccination record card (or another country's equivalent) as well as the name of the vaccine manufacturer and the date each vaccine dose was received.
- Current, unvaccinated residents or employees are required to get the first dose by November 15, and, if applicable, the second dose must be received by December 15. Documentation of vaccination must be provided to the executive director or her designate within three (3) days of occurrence.
- Religious and medical exemptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the executive director or her designate. New exemption requests must be submitted by November 1.
- Failure to comply with the vaccination requirement or obtain an approved exemption will result in corrective action up to and including termination or dismissal for staff members and eviction for residents.
- Those granted a vaccination exemption must comply with the following requirements:

- One must be tested twice a week and provide proof of a negative test result for each test to the executive director or her designate.
- Tests may not be done any closer than every third day (i.e., First week – Monday and Thursday, Second week – Sunday and Wednesday).
- Tests must be professionally done at a licensed establishment. Self-administered/home tests will not be permitted.
- Tests will be done at the resident's and/or employee's personal expense.
- Failure to comply with this testing requirement will result in corrective action up to and including termination or dismissal for staff members and eviction for residents.
- All new hires or new residents after November 15 are required to be vaccinated or receive an approved exemption.
- If vaccine shortages occur and/or if CDC or government officials' recommendations are altered, TMH may change, suspend, or revoke all or part of this policy.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Who will have access to the information I provide to TMH?**

The confidentiality and respect to TMH residents and employees' rights are of the utmost importance. TMH will not use any genetic information, disability status or information regarding religious beliefs to disadvantage residents and/or employees in any way. Records documenting vaccinations, declinations, or exemptions will be maintained by the executive director. All information received under this policy will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible. Sharing of information shall be based on a need-to-know basis.

### **What is the process for an exemption and what will be considered?**

Residents and/or employees may request an exemption from the mandatory COVID-19 vaccination by submitting an exemption request form, as outlined below, for: 1) disability/medical contraindications or precautions, or 2) a religious belief. All residents and/or employees should note that personal, political, and/or philosophical objections to vaccinations are not considered sufficient justification for granting an exemption from the mandatory COVID-19 vaccination.

Those requesting exemptions due to a disability/medical contradiction/precaution or religious belief must submit an exemption request form to the executive director or her designate. She will review each exemption request on an individual basis and consider approval of any such request.

The following instructions should be followed, depending on type of exemption requested:

- **Disability/Medical Exemption:** If a resident and/or employee has a disability and/or medical condition that presents a contraindication to receiving a COVID-19 vaccine, they must complete the medical exemption request form and attach the relevant supporting medical documentation from their licensed treating provider as shown in the medical exemption form.
- **Religious Exemption:** If a resident and/or employee declines a COVID-19 vaccine because it conflicts with a sincerely held religious belief, they must complete the religious exemption request form. Residents and/or employees must supply documentation from their spiritual leader that explains the specific faith-based teachings that oppose immunizations and makes specific reference to the resident's or employee's specific sincerely-held religious belief.

Executive Director Jennifer Sharp will notify the employee or resident of the decision about an exemption request. If an exemption is not granted, the resident and/or employee has 30 days from notification of the denial of the exemption to comply by being immunized.

### **What will happen if I do not comply with the vaccination policy?**

The status of residents and/or employees not in compliance with this policy will be reviewed by Executive Director Jennifer Sharp. An employee who has not provided documentation of vaccination or received an exemption approval will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. A resident who has not provided documentation of vaccination or received an exemption approval will be asked to leave TMH.

**Do vaccinated residents and staff still have to wear masks in common areas, practice social distancing, and follow other D.C. mandates regarding COVID?**

Yes, everyone at TMH (residents, employees, visitors, vendors, etc.), regardless of vaccination status, must continue to follow TMH's existing COVID-19 protocols, which include wearing masks over the mouth and nose as well as practicing social distancing. These protocols are based in large part on D.C. mandates and guidance from the CDC. As these factors change, TMH leadership will reconsider the protocols and alert all if the protocols are amended.

**What is the TMH vaccination policy for visitors?**

Visitors waiting in the immediate lobby area for residents or employees are not required to show proof of vaccination, but they must follow all other aspects of the TMH COVID-19 protocol. All guests who will be staying overnight or visiting other parts of the TMH property must show proof of full vaccination to the front desk personnel when they first arrive. A copy will be made of this information and will remain confidential. Those not able to comply with this requirement will not be allowed to leave the immediate lobby area.

**What happens if a resident and/or employee tests positive?**

Unfortunately, "breakthrough" cases do occur even after someone has been fully vaccinated. Anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19 must immediately notify the executive director or her designate of the positive test result. The procedure outlined in the existing TMH COVID-19 protocol will be followed.

**How will booster shots factor into TMH's vaccination requirement?**

TMH's policy is for our residents and/or staff members to be fully vaccinated based on the CDC's definition. If the definition should change to include booster shots for all, TMH will revise its policy accordingly and notify residents and staff.