

**THE COVID-19 VACCINE SAVES LIVES, AND WE HAVE A VOICE IN HOW WE ROLL OUT THE VACCINE MANDATE AT UW MEDICINE**

On August 9, the state of Washington made it mandatory for all healthcare workers to become fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by October 18. As healthcare workers, we agree that the COVID vaccines are safe, effective, and the best way to protect ourselves and our families from COVID-19. But as members of a union, we know that we have the right to bargain any changes to our jobs. Our elected Executive Board members from Airlift Northwest, Harborview and UW Medical Center Northwest and Clinics came together to bargain the impacts of the vaccine mandate and used the following values to guide us in those conversations.

**OUR VALUES AS A UNION**

- Every worker deserves a safe workplace.
- As union members, we have the right to bargain this change in working conditions.
- We trust science and understand that the vaccine is an important component to getting the pandemic under control.
- We will not tolerate discrimination of any kind. Vaccine information and access must be made available in workers’ preferred languages. No worker will be made to wear a sticker or button that shows vaccination status.
- While vaccines are incredibly effective, they do not replace adequate and safe PPE and safe ventilation in our workplaces.
- Getting the vaccine must be as accessible as possible, including offering them on work time and paid time off for side effects.
- Employers must maintain safe staffing levels by doing everything in their power to staff to patient census while minimizing use of mandatory overtime: offering overtime, incentive shifts, referral and hiring bonuses, and utilizing travelers and agency workers.



“Being in a union ensures we have a voice in changes to our working conditions. We support vaccination as the safest way to protect ourselves. We were able to bargain to make sure everyone, including our coworkers on leave, will be notified, has a clear and transparent process to be compliant with the Governor’s mandate and keep their jobs, including ensure people have as many opportunities as possible to get vaccinated. We have an agreement that provides clear timelines and expectations so we can retain staff. We encourage everyone to be in compliance with the mandate so we can be safe and keep our units staffed.”

***Olga Ramirez, 3E, Harborview Medical Center RN, Executive Board Member***

**Important dates to be fully vaccinated by October 18**

Vaccine	Series dose requirement	First dose no later than	Second dose
Pfizer	2 doses, 21 days apart	9/13/2021	10/4/2021
Moderna	2 doses, 28 days apart	9/6/2021	10/4/2021
Janssen/J&J	Single dose	10/4/2021	N/A



“We joined with Executive Board members from across UW Medicine to make sure the questions and concerns our members had regarding the state vaccine mandate were heard by management. Because we have a union, we were able to negotiate the impacts of the mandate. We encourage everyone to get the vaccine, and we support the science behind them. We also felt it was important to bargain a process for those who choose not to get the vaccine, and to make sure options, expectations, and deadlines were clearly communicated to all our members. We negotiated quick timelines for grievances should they be needed. Now our members at UWMC- Northwest, the Neighborhood Clinics, Airlift NW and Harborview, vaccinated or not, should have a better understanding of all the deadlines and options that could affect them as employees of UW Medicine. The mandate could have had much worse repercussions for workers at all facilities had we not had our union.”


***Genevieve Sanford, Ultrasound, Northwest Hospital and Clinics, Executive Board Member***

Our Vaccine Mandate MOU Highlights

Who is impacted by the vaccine mandate?	All employees
How to be compliant?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Be fully vaccinated prior to October 18 and provide proof of vaccination</li><li>Apply and be approved for a religious or medical accommodation no later than September 24 to have requests processed on time and to ensure no loss of pay if the exemption decision is not made prior to October 18. UW will process requests for exemption received prior to October 18.</li><li>If a second opinion is required for a medical exemption, the Employer will pay for all associated costs of the second opinion.</li></ul>
Can I still be vaccinated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Yes. We can be released with pay for up to 2 hours to receive a COVID-19 vaccination and/or booster shot.</li><li>Employees who previously used accrued leave to receive a vaccine dose can be reimbursed up to two hours of leave time.</li></ul>
If I have an approved religious or medical exemption, what's next?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>If a request for an exemption is approved, UW will review if an accommodation is possible.</li></ul> <p>We have the right to have a union delegate present at accommodation meetings</p>
What if I want to get the vaccine but recently contracted COVID	Paid administrative leave or/and temporary accommodation will be available for those who have contracted COVID and are in the waiting period to get the vaccine.
What if I am in the process of being vaccinated, but will not be fully vaccinated by October 18?	If we have gotten the first dose of the vaccine prior to October 18, we may use leave without pay for 30 days and retain the right to return to previous position or a vacant position in the same job class at our work location once fully vaccinated and if the positions has not been permanently filled.
What if I don't comply?	If a worker has not initiated an exemption request and fails to provide proof of vaccination by October 18, 2021, the worker will be subject to non-disciplinary separation. Workers who are subject to non-disciplinary separation shall be eligible for state employment upon becoming fully vaccinated.
Keeping our units staffed	UW will make every effort to maintain our staffing levels and post positions vacated due to the mandate. The emergency use of travelers will be an added resource and not be used to reduce bargaining unit positions.

Scan the QR code to see the full MOU


1 Information & Resources




1. <https://1199nwcovidresponse.org/vaccine/>




2. <https://1199nw.org/3nID4gZ>

2 Agreement





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