

August 17, 2021

Dear Health Care Workers,

On Monday, August 16, 2021, the District of Columbia Department of Health (DC Health) announced a COVID-19 vaccine requirement for all licensed, certified, and registered health professionals and all unlicensed healthcare workers in the District of Columbia.

Emergency action by the Director of DC Health is necessary because the spread of a contagious disease such as COVID-19, caused by SARS-CoV-2, is an imminent threat to the health, safety, and welfare of District residents, visitors, and persons providing health care in the District of Columbia. Self-reported data available to DC Health indicates an alarming number of health professionals who are licensed, registered, or certified by DC Health, persons who are certified by DC Health to provide emergency medical services, and unlicensed healthcare workers are not vaccinated for SARS-CoV-2. Lack of vaccination for these health care workers can easily lead to the spread of SARS-CoV-2 among vulnerable patients receiving care from these health care workers and among the pool of health care workers. The vast majority of new cases of SARS-CoV-2 in the District of Columbia occur among unvaccinated persons. The COVID-19 vaccine requirement is essential to decrease the likelihood that unvaccinated health care workers will remain a major potential source of the spread of SARS-CoV-2.

In the coming days, you will receive additional information and instructions on how to provide your vaccination status to DC Health. These instructions will be sent to the contact information DC Health has on file as part of your licensee profile.

All licensed, certified, and registered health professionals and all unlicensed healthcare workers must fulfill the requirement to receive at least one dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine (Moderna or Pfizer) or the single dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine no later than September 30, 2021. Failure to meet this requirement can result in disciplinary action including suspension and revocation of a health professional's license, certification, or registration.

The District of Columbia continues to make progress in the fight against COVID-19. Increasing the COVID-19 vaccination rates amongst healthcare workers and the general public is critical to our ability to create safe and healthy workplaces and communities and to ending the pandemic.

Thank you for your continued work to ensure the safety, health and well-being of those who live, work, and learn in the District of Columbia.

Sincerely,



LaQuandra S. Nesbitt, MD, MPH
Director