

**What's New** – This document replaces the guidance addendum issued on August 23, 2021. All executive branch employees, interns, volunteers and contract staff are required to continue providing their COVID-19 vaccination status and documentation and continue wearing masks while indoors in state facilities and while conducting state business indoors. Beginning October 18, 2021, the DOA, in partnership with the DHS, will be implementing a required weekly COVID-19 testing program for all executive branch employees, interns, and contract staff. Executive branch employees, interns, or contract staff will receive an exemption from the program if they are fully vaccinated from COVID-19 and have provided their vaccination status.

The Wisconsin State Government continues to apply COVID-19-related workplace policies consistent with guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS), and local public health officials. Our goal is to provide a safe environment for Wisconsin state employees, contractors, interns, volunteers, and members of the public. Layered mitigation measures, including verification of vaccination status, testing for individuals who are unvaccinated, and face-covering practices, are key to our strategy to maintain a safe working environment for employees, contractors, interns, volunteers, and members of the public. This guidance will continue to be updated based on COVID-19 transmission rates and any additional information provided by federal and state public health experts.

This updated guidance recognizes that in order to control COVID-19, two things must happen:

**1) higher vaccination rates, and 2) lower disease transmission.**

This change in guidance reflects new evidence including:

- Delta is different. The Delta variant is highly infectious and now represents nearly all COVID cases in the U.S. and in Wisconsin. With the original strain of COVID-19, an infected person was likely to infect two other people who were likely to infect two additional people for a total of six cases from one infection. With the Delta variant, an infected person is likely to infect five people who are likely to infect 25 people for a total of 30 cases from one infection. Six compared to 30—you can easily see how this variant will spread like wildfire.
- Vaccines remain highly effective. In the few cases where vaccinated people are infected, their symptoms tend to be milder and their risk for hospitalization and death is far, far lower than if they were not vaccinated. Getting vaccinated could save your life or the lives of your loved ones.
- People who are vaccinated and infected with the Delta variant may still spread disease to others. This was not true for previous variants of COVID-19. According to the CDC, vaccinated people *without symptoms* can transmit the Delta variant. That's why wearing masks remains a critical tool alongside vaccination.
- Wisconsinites under the age of 12 still cannot receive the vaccine. Thousands of others may not receive full protection because they are immunocompromised. Getting vaccinated, along with wearing a mask, is the best way to protect the most vulnerable in Wisconsin.

## VACCINATION STATUS REQUIREMENT

**VACCINATION STATUS REQUIREMENT.** All executive branch employees, interns, and contract staff are required to provide information on their COVID-19 vaccination status. Employees, interns, and contract staff shall utilize the STAR HR system to update their vaccination status and upload documentation verifying their completed vaccination status. Use the following [instructions](#) to access the STAR HR system for this purpose.

DOA's State Bureau of Procurement will be issuing additional updated guidance to agencies with contractors who currently do not have access to the STARHR System. Additionally, agencies should consult with DOA's Division of Personnel Management on policies addressing status reporting requirements for agency volunteers.

Visitors, customers, and vendors are strongly encouraged, but not required, to be vaccinated. However, these individuals are required to follow COVID-19 guidance while in a state facility, including any posted requirements in

specific buildings or spaces. Employees should not ask to verify the COVID-19 vaccination status of any of these individuals.

## VACCINE, TESTING & MASK REQUIREMENTS

**TESTING REQUIREMENT.** Beginning October 18, 2021, the DOA, in partnership with the DHS, will be implementing a required weekly COVID-19 testing program for all executive branch employees, interns, and contract staff. Executive branch state employees, interns, and contract staff are exempted from this testing requirement if they are fully vaccinated from COVID-19 and have provided their vaccination status. This requirement also does not apply to individuals who have an approved agreement in place to work 100% of the time at home and have no expectation, under any circumstances, to be physically present in a state facility or have contact with other state employees or members of the public while performing their duties.

Employees, interns, and contract staff who are not exempted will be responsible for uploading testing information and documentation into the STARHR System within 24 hours of completing the test and/or receiving their results. DOA, in consultation with DHS, will provide agencies and individuals with additional information regarding free testing locations and procedures that individuals can use during their working hours. In addition to the state-provided free testing options, employees, interns, and contract staff will also have the option of obtaining a weekly test on their own time via their health care provider, pharmacy, local public health office, or community-based testing location. Employees, interns, and contract staff who opt to use a non-state-provided testing provider will be responsible for any costs associated with the test.

DOA's State Bureau of Procurement will provide additional guidance to agencies with contractors who currently do not have access to the STARHR System. Additionally, agencies should consult with DOA's Division of Personnel Management on policies addressing testing requirements for agency volunteers.

**CONTINUED MASK REQUIREMENT:** All executive branch employees, contract staff, interns, and volunteers are still required to wear masks while indoors in state facilities or while conducting state business. All members of the public are still strongly encouraged to wear masks while in state facilities. Wearing a mask continues to be a critical tool in helping stop the spread of COVID-19, particularly the Delta variant.

**EMPLOYEES SEEKING VACCINATION.** COVID-19 vaccines are *safe and effective*. Unvaccinated employees are encouraged to register and schedule a vaccine using [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov) to search for a local provider. Vaccines.gov provides search options by vaccine type and location, including information about the availability of the COVID-19 vaccine at:

- Your doctor or health care provider,
- Pharmacies,
- Community-based vaccination clinics, and
- On-site vaccination clinics.

Additional information about how to locate a vaccine can be found [here](#).

To further reduce barriers for those employees, interns, and contract staff that would like to be vaccinated, agencies and supervisors shall, to the maximum extent operationally feasible, accommodate requests by individuals to receive the COVID-19 vaccine during working hours. Accommodations may include allowing the individual to remain in pay status, providing flexible work schedules, allowing short notice requests for leave, and/or other flexibilities at the discretion of the agency.

The Departments of Corrections, Health Services, and Veterans Affairs may issue additional regulations for their employees, residents, and visitors of congregate living facilities. Additionally, any agency may issue additional regulations if necessary, in order to comply with federal regulations. All agency rules or guidance require approval by the Division of Personnel Management Administrator prior to implementation.