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MNHS

5 October 2021

MEMORANDUM FOR All State Employees and Supervisors of State Employees

SUBJECT: MNHS BULLETIN 2021-04: Unvaccinated State Employee COVID-19 Weekly Testing

1. Commencing 12 October 2021, all State employees within the Division of Military and Naval Affairs (DMNA) were required to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 or be subject to weekly COVID-19 testing. This Bulletin provides the guidance for the weekly testing requirement for employees who appear to be unvaccinated as they have not uploaded proof of vaccination.
2. The Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) has created a secure employee vaccination and test result submission portal (portal) that allows employees to submit proof of COVID-19 vaccination and employee COVID-19 test results. The portal is accessible at <https://covidsubmit.ny.gov/>. Please see the attached employee handout for instructions on the use of the portal (Attachment A).
3. Fully vaccinated is defined as being 2 or more weeks after the final dose (e.g., first for Janssen/Johnson & Johnson, second for Pfizer and Moderna) of the vaccine approved by the FDA or authorized by the FDA for emergency use or listed for emergency use by the World Health Organization (WHO).
4. State employees requiring weekly testing will need to use a New York State (NYS) contracted vendor to be tested. As of 12 October 2021, there are two (2) testing options:
 - a. An unvaccinated State employee can arrange to have a specimen collection kit from a NYS contracted vendor sent to their home to collect a specimen for testing, or
 - b. Make arrangements to go to a designated location provided by the NYS contracted vendor, referred to as a Patient Service Center (PSC), to have a specimen collected.
 - c. State employees will receive their test results through the vendor's on-line portal. It is the employee's responsibility to upload their results weekly to the ITS portal.

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SUBJECT: MNHS BULLETIN 2021-03: State Employee COVID-19 Vaccine Proof and Testing

5. The weekly testing requirement applies to all unvaccinated State employees of DMNA, including hourly and contract employees. Weekly testing is required until an employee becomes fully vaccinated. For information regarding the steps for fully vaccinated employees please reference “MNHS BULLETIN 2021-03: State Employee COVID-19 Vaccine Proof and Testing, 5 October 2021.”
6. To meet the weekly testing requirement, which initiated on 12 October 2021, unvaccinated State employees must immediately arrange for their first test and have until **close of business 19 October 2021**, to submit their first COVID test result. Testing must occur every 7 days thereafter.
7. It is anticipated test results will be issued within 24 hours after the specimen is received by the testing laboratory. If test results are delayed, the unvaccinated State employee is still required to be tested again on the 7th day. Results must be submitted immediately upon receipt.
8. Unvaccinated State employees may only submit test results from a New York State (NYS) contracted vendor listed in Table 1 at the end of this Bulletin. Test results from any other test location will be rejected (not accepted) by DMNA State Human Resources (MNHS).
9. NYS contracted testing vendors are only to be used for the purposes of the weekly testing requirement. Other uses of the testing contract are strictly prohibited, and costs associated with unauthorized use will be the responsibility of the individual who authorized the improper use.
10. Unvaccinated State employees may not be compensated for time spent registering for testing appointments, taking a PSC test, sending in the completed at home test or uploading test results to the ITS portal. Minimal time is expected to be spent on these activities.
11. Whenever possible, unvaccinated employees are encouraged to utilize the at-home test option. However, unvaccinated State employees may choose to change vendors or test options as necessary to fulfill the weekly testing requirement.
12. Current policy guidance states: “While it is preferable that at-home tests be taken at-home, an agency shall permit employees to take the test during their workday, where practicable, so long as the employee can properly transmit the completed test in accordance with the testing vendor procedures.” Any supervisor allowing employees to use the “at-home” test at work, must ensure it is taken in safe and social distanced environment that is sanitized following the test completion. State Employees wishing to complete the “at-home” testing at work must discuss this with their supervisor before commencing the testing.

13. The current NYS contracted vendor uses a nasal specimen swab that is inserted into the nasal cavity; these are NOT nasopharyngeal specimens which require insertion of the swab deep into the sinuses. As additional NYS contracted vendors are added, additional testing services may use other specimen collection options.

14. To begin the process, an unvaccinated State employee will need to choose their testing option (at-home collection or collection at a PSC), a NYS contracted vendor that offers the service (as listed in the Attachment B, Table 2) and then use the vendor's on-line portal to register for testing. Once registered, the employee can order the testing as needed.

15. It is the State employee's responsibility to submit proof of testing in a timely manner every week and upload COVID-19 test results at <https://covidsubmit.ny.gov>.

16. The requirement for weekly testing continues indefinitely unless the employee becomes fully vaccinated. State employees with a medical or religious exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine must receive weekly testing. Employees on extended leave (1 week or more) will be excused from weekly testing during the period of absence. State Human Resources must be notified of the extended absence to record the requirement is temporarily excused.

17. A symptomatic (sick) unvaccinated State employee must use the at-home collection option to have a specimen collected for testing. Symptomatic (sick) employees may not report to an in-person PSC testing location. For additional information on COVID-19 symptoms, go to <https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/protect-yourself-and-your-family-coronavirus-covid-19>.

18. All weekly test results must either be "positive/detected" or "negative/undetected". If an unvaccinated State employee receives a result other than positive/detected or negative/undetected (e.g., an indeterminate result), the employee must be retested immediately by the same vendor.

19. All State employees (vaccinated and unvaccinated employees) should report to work unless:

- a. They have tested POSITIVE for COVID-19*;
- b. They are sick, especially with known COVID-like symptoms (see link above)*;
- c. They have been placed in Quarantine by a Department of Health (DOH)*;
- d. They have known close contact with a COVID-19 positive individual and the State employee is not vaccinated*; or
- e. MNHS has placed the individual in precautionary quarantine.
- f. *MNHS (specifically, Laurie Romer, Elizabeth Cummings and Marilyn Hartley), are to be notified immediately.

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20. State Human Resources will work with supervisors regarding any unvaccinated State employee who fails to meet the weekly testing requirement.

21. Table 1 of current NYS vendors and access links:

Vendor	Specimen Type	Offer At-Home Collection	Offer Collection at a PSC	Link(s) for Test Registration
Quest Diagnostics	Nasal swab	Yes	Yes	Step 1: Register at: Quest Diagnostics Authentication Service(care360.com) Step 2: Order test at: NYS Program URL

22. Attachment B provides the information for “Quest Diagnostics’ Patient Service Center” Locations and Hours of Operation for NYS unvaccinated State employees.

23. For State employees wishing to arrange a COVID vaccination appointment please visit: <https://covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov>. This site has information on making an appointment at either a State-run vaccination site or other vaccination sites, like pharmacies, near where the employee lives.

24. For assistance with Excelsior Pass/Excelsior Pass Plus please visit <http://on.ny.gov/epass-help>.

25. Please note this information is subject to change.

26. For questions about this Bulletin or other State employee COVID-19 related matters, please contact MNHS at 518-786-4830 or send an email to Mrs. Laurie Romer laurie.m.romer.nfg@mail.mil and the undersigned at marilyn.m.hartley.nfg@mail.mil.

FOR THE ADJUTANT GENERAL:

Attachments

MARILYN HARTLEY
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Management