



Illinois Heartland Library System

MEMO TO: IHLS Board of Directors
FROM: Leslie M. Bednar
DATE: September 21, 2021
RE: IHLS Staff Health and COVID-19

IHLS staff have worked within the “new normal” confines brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic for the past 18 months. To everyone’s credit they have adapted to the changes quite well, especially considering there are likely more changes in their lives outside of work. At various points in the pandemic:

- all staff sheltered in place following Governor Pritzker’s Executive Orders
- IHLS paused library materials delivery
- our staff self-quarantined when returning from a state with high virus transmission rates
- Operations and some Administrative staff returned to our buildings to provide delivery with a varied number of item quarantine days
- all staff returned to our buildings following federal and state recommended health protocols including wearing masks at all times, 6-foot social distancing, and hand hygiene

With all the caution to protect staff, we continue to have staff and members of their immediate family become ill with the virus. Case numbers in central and southern Illinois have risen dramatically.

Attached please find our COVID-19 Testing/Vaccination Procedures for staff. We put these procedures in place to protect each other, our families, and the community at large. As an employer, IHLS has a responsibility to help stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus. We also put together a list of questions we suspected many of our colleagues would have in response to this procedure.

If you have any questions, please share them with me at: lbednar@illinoisheartland.org I look forward to seeing everyone next Tuesday!

Thank you.

IMAGINING TOMORROW ~ DELIVERING POSSIBILITIES TODAY!



COVID-19

New COVID-19 Testing/Vaccination Procedures for IHLS Staff



Danielle Beasley
Communications Coordinator

Due to the increase in the COVID-19 outbreak, the increased exposure of employees to each other, and the need to assist in preventing the spread of this pandemic, IHLS will be implementing required COVID-19 testing/vaccination procedures for IHLS staff in order to help safeguard the health and well-being of our employees, families, and the community. All employees, including temporary employees, will be required to either show proof of negative COVID-19 test results every two weeks or show proof of vaccination against the coronavirus, effective **October 11, 2021**.

This procedure complies with all applicable laws and is based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Illinois Department of Public Health, and all applicable state and local health orders.

Submitting Proof of Vaccination

By September 30, 2021, all employees who have been fully vaccinated, or have had one shot of the COVID-19 vaccine where two shots are required, need to send a copy/image of his/her COVID-19 vaccination card to Human Resources at hr@illinoisheartland.org. The email subject line should indicate the following:

- Name (last, first)
- Department
- Hub location

Example: Smith, Joseph, Operations, EDW

An email receipt will be sent back to the employee verifying that it has been received by Human Resources. The copy of the vaccination card will be stored in the employee's confidential medical file. *Please do not submit your vaccination card or*

other health information to your supervisor or any person outside of Human Resources.

Submission of a fake or altered vaccination card will be treated the same as the falsification of any other IHLS document and will subject the employee to discipline up to and including immediate discharge.

Employees seeking to be vaccinated are entitled to up to two hours of authorized absence for the purpose of getting the vaccination. Please contact Human Resources for directions on how to be paid for this time off.

Employees who are not fully vaccinated by October 11, 2021, shall be required to test for COVID-19 every two weeks as described below until they are considered fully vaccinated.

Submitting Proof of Testing

The employee will need to send a copy/image of his/her negative test result to Human Resources at hr@illinoisheartland.org. The email subject line should indicate the following:

- Name (last, first)
- Department
- Hub location

Example: Smith, Joseph, Operations, EDW

The first such test must be conducted within the last 72 hours of the start of their workday on October 11. Please see the included FAQ for more details and examples on specific scenarios.

1. If the test is positive, the employee is **NOT** to come to work and **must** contact Human Resources (217.689.0999) for further instruction.
2. If the test is negative, the employee shall provide a copy to Human Resources and can report to work. The test results must include the employee's name, test date, and test result. The test results will be kept by Human Resources in the employee's confidential medical file.

If an employee chooses to submit proof of negative test results rather than be vaccinated, the employee is responsible for scheduling and paying for these tests

because each employee has the option of getting a COVID-19 vaccine without any cost or expense. However, employees may test on work time providing the absence is approved by their supervisor and their absence does not present a disruption for their department.

Employees required to be tested biweekly are entitled to up to two hours of authorized absence for the purpose of getting tested. Please contact Human Resources for directions on how to be paid for this time off. (*updated 9/20/2021*)

Should an employee become fully vaccinated any time after October 11, 2021, the record of this vaccination should be submitted to Human Resources as described above. Upon confirmation of receipt of the vaccination record documenting full vaccination, the employee will no longer be required to test biweekly.

Please see the included FAQ below for more details.

Mandatory Testing/Vaccine Procedure - Frequently Asked Questions

September 10, 2021

- **What does IHLS consider fully vaccinated?**
 - 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
 - 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine
 - The CDC definition of "fully vaccinated" can be found here: [When You've Been Fully Vaccinated | CDC](#)
 - A **booster shot** may be required at a later date based on CDC Guidelines, and IHLS will make a decision regarding boosters as more information becomes available.

- **What if I am vaccinated but lost my vaccination card?**
 - In place of the vaccination card you can send a printout or screen shot of your vaccination date(s) from the vaccination center. Please

make sure that ONLY your COVID-19 vaccination information is on this document. We cannot accept documentation with other medical information.

- **If I already sent a copy of my vaccination card to Human Resources, such as during the recent voluntary period, do I need to send my card again?**
 - No; if you already submitted a copy of your vaccination record to Human Resources and received a confirmation that it was accepted, then you do not need to submit your record again.

- **What if I am vaccinated and do not want to send Human Resources my COVID-19 vaccination card?**
 - If you do not supply your vaccination card, we have no way to verify if you have been vaccinated. You will be treated as though you are not vaccinated and will be subject to COVID-19 testing every 2 weeks as defined in "Submitting Proof of Testing" of the Testing/Vaccine Procedure.

- **Where can I go to get the COVID-19 vaccine?**
 - Search [Vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov), text your zip code to 438829, or call 800.232.0233 to find COVID-19 vaccine locations near you.

- **What if I decide to not get the vaccine?**
 - If you decide not to get the vaccine, you will be required to test every two weeks. Each test must be taken within 72 hours of the beginning of your two-week period.

- **If I am on vacation (or another type of leave) and I am unvaccinated, by when am I required to take a COVID-19 test and submit my negative test results?**
 - Testing is required to be taken and submitted within 72 hours of your first scheduled workday back.

- **If I do not get my results by the 72-hour timeframe, can I come to work, and will I be paid?**
 - No; if you do not get your testing completed and negative results sent to Human Resources within the designated timeframe, you will

not be allowed to return to work. The employee will be required to utilize any earned and unused personal time, vacation time, and floating holidays for workdays missed. If accrued paid time off is unavailable, then this time will be unpaid.

- **What if I choose not to get the vaccine and refuse testing?**

- IHLS feels strongly about maintaining the health and safety of its employees. Refusal to follow the procedure either through testing or vaccination, will be considered a disciplinary matter and will subject the employee to discipline, up to and including immediate discharge, depending upon all of the relevant circumstances.

- **What if I get the vaccine and have an adverse reaction?**

- Through September 30, 2021, we have protections in place from the Families First Coronavirus Relief Act (FFCRA). FFCRA provides employees, among other benefits, paid time off to recover following receipt of the COVID-19 vaccine. You do not have to use any of your personal benefit time while you recover, and IHLS is reimbursed by the federal government. Please remember FFCRA ends September 30, and we have no indication the benefits will be extended beyond that date.

- **Can I take an over-the-counter, at-home COVID-19 test?**

- We are not allowing at-home COVID-19 testing because we do not have the current resources to observe test taking. You must test at a local approved testing facility. Here is a list of some of the approved testing facilities: [COVID-19 Testing and Locations | MinuteClinic \(cvs.com\)](#), [COVID-19 Testing | Select Location | Walgreens, Home | Marion Diagnostic Center, LLC | Marion, Illinois, Welcome to Madison County, IL.](#)

- **By when do I need to get tested?**

- If you are not fully vaccinated by October 11, you will need to submit your first negative COVID-19 test result by this date.
- For example: If you will be at work on Monday, October 11, plan for testing on Friday, October 8, in order to submit the results before starting work on October 11. A new negative COVID-19 test will then need to occur by October 22 in order to submit another negative

result two weeks later on October 25.

- **Why must the test be taken within 72 hours of the day we have to turn in results?**
 - Testing must be done within the 72-hour timeframe to make sure that the test is current and to allow employees adequate time to take the test.

- **The federal government and other agencies require non-vaccinated staff to be tested on a weekly basis. Why does IHLS require testing on a bi-weekly basis?**
 - Bi-weekly testing is the standard followed by the Illinois Secretary of State/State Library. It is possible IHLS may adjust the frequency of required testing to weekly in the future.