



NEW HANOVER COUNTY

COUNTY MANAGER'S OFFICE

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Administrative Memorandum

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Approved By:	Chris Coudriet, County Manager

Vaccination and Testing Requirements for Reportable Communicable Diseases

I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

New Hanover County Administration is committed to ensuring the continuity of operations and promoting a safe environment for employees during outbreaks of reportable communicable diseases.

COVID-19 is a reportable communicable disease and has created a threat against our organization's ability to maintain county operations at the standard and level of service expected by the community and, is creating an unsafe environment for New Hanover County employees.

New Hanover County Public Health recommends vaccination from COVID-19 as the best protection against the disease and recommends an organizational and individual department vaccination rate of not less than 75%.

II. POLICY

In order to ensure the organization and individual departments are fully protected against COVID-19, it is New Hanover County Administration's policy to achieve a minimum vaccination rate of 75% against COVID-19 by October 1, 2021. Therefore, New Hanover County Administration will require the following measures:

- A. Vaccination Status** - All New Hanover County employees will be required to report their vaccination status.
- B. COVID 19 Testing** - Employees who are not fully vaccinated will be required to begin a weekly testing regime to screen for the virus.
- C. New Employees** - New employees will be required to be fully vaccinated from COVID 19, with exceptions provided for federally-approved medical or religious exemptions.

New Hanover County Administration reserves the right to explore other measures to ensure workplace safety and continuity of operations. This could include an employee vaccine mandate for current employees who are not eligible for a medical or religious exemption.

III. ORGANIZATION/INDIVIDUALS IMPACTED

All New Hanover County employees and temporary employees through a staffing agency.

IV. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Vaccination Status

Employees are required to verify their vaccination status and their intent to be vaccinated by completing a COVID-19 Vaccination Inquiry Form and submitting this form to the WAY Wellness Center, operated by Synergy Healthcare, a third-party healthcare organization, no later than September 1, 2021.

Falsifying this information is grounds for dismissal.

COVID 19 Screening Testing

Any New Hanover County employee who has not been fully vaccinated is required to receive a weekly Rapid Antigen test for COVID-19. Under this policy, unvaccinated employees must get their first COVID-19 test between September 9, 2021 and September 15, 2021. After the initial test, unvaccinated employees will be required to get tested weekly with no more than seven (7) calendar days between tests.

Testing will be provided by a third-party vendor at the expense of New Hanover County, through the use of American Rescue Plan funds.

Employees may be able to complete required testing during their normal work hours or may complete testing during their own time, outside of their normal work hours. Employees do not have to use personal leave for testing during normal work hours; however, time spent complying with the testing requirement that is outside of normal working hours is not compensable. Supervisors are expected to work with employees to ensure their ability to be tested while meeting the business needs of the department.

If an unvaccinated employee is in a leave status for longer than seven (7) days, they will need to report a negative Rapid Antigen COVID-19 test to the third-party vendor prior to returning to work.

If an employee receives a positive test result and has no symptoms, they are required to isolate for ten (10) days from the date of the test. If symptoms are present, the employee must isolate for ten (10) days since the onset of symptoms and can return to work if they have been fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications, and symptoms of COVID-19 have improved.

New Employees

External candidates hired into a job that posted on or after August 10, 2021 will be required to be vaccinated unless they have a qualifying medical exemption or religious exemption. Full vaccination for

COVID-19 is required within 30 days of employment. Vaccination status, to include documentation if fully vaccinated, is required by the first day of employment. This will be a condition of employment and communicated in the application process with all potential candidates.

V. POLICY EVALUATION

The policy will be evaluated in the context of the spread of Communicable Diseases in our community and organization and in compliance with federal, state, and local orders.