

Monday, September 20, 2021

Message from Mitch

Preparing for the COVID-19 Vaccine Mandate

The New York State COVID-19 mandate for health care workers goes into effect September 27th. I am happy to report that as of today, more than 80% of our workforce has been immunized against COVID-19, and every day, more and more of you are getting vaccinated and uploading your vaccine information into [our registry](#).

I am so grateful for the cooperation you have shown and your commitment to creating healthy environments in our health care facilities to protect our patients and coworkers. I am hopeful that many more of you will decide to take this step before September 27 and can continue to be part of the NYC Health + Hospitals family.

Those of you who remain unvaccinated will be placed on leave on September 27, or October 10th, [depending where you work](#) and should not report to work once placed on leave. But even while you are on leave, you can get vaccinated and we will welcome you back once we have your records in our registry.

NYC Health + Hospitals leadership team has been planning for this transition since the mandate was announced. While we hope the staffing gaps will be minimal, we have put into place a number of strategies to fill critical positions that may be left open, support our vaccinated staff, and preserve the delivery of safe, quality care for our patients.

Our plan includes:

- One-to-one conversations with unvaccinated staff, encouraging them to get vaccinated as soon as possible, and explaining the consequences of not complying with the State mandate
- Express access to vaccination, making it easy and convenient for staff to get free COVID-19 vaccines in their workplaces
- Closely monitoring staff vaccination rates at every facility and unit level to estimate potential staffing gaps

- Onboarding certified, trained, temporary workers at every level, including nursing and non-clinical staff
- Active recruitment to permanently backfill positions
- Extending opportunities for over time (OT) for vaccinated employees
- Coordinating with our physician affiliation partners to fill positions
- Possible reassignment of staff to where they are needed most.

We don't want anyone to lose pay, and we certainly don't want anyone to lose their job.

I respect the views of people who do not wish to be vaccinated. Sometimes we do things as a society that not every individual agrees with, but we do it to achieve a greater goal. In this case, we want everyone vaccinated so we can continue to provide safe care to the 1.4 million New Yorkers who have chosen us as their health care provider.

I look forward to talking to you and answering your questions about the vaccine mandate and other topics during my next [Live Staff Town Hall](#) on Wednesday, September 22 at 11am.

Thank you for your heroic efforts to protect New Yorkers from COVID-19 and the sacrifices you make every day to meet the needs of our patients.

-Mitch



Dr. Mitchell Katz
President and CEO

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