

**Vernon Area Public Library District**  
**MANDATORY COVID-19 VACCINATION /TESTING PROGRAM**

**Purpose**

The Vernon Area Public Library District recognizes its responsibility to provide employees a workplace free of recognized hazards. This policy is intended to maximize the protection afforded by the COVID-19 vaccine. The goal of this program is to protect employees, employees' family members, patrons, visitors, others affiliated with us and the broader community. This policy is intended to follow all state and local laws. It is based upon guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and public health and licensing authorities, as applicable.

**Scope**

As a condition of employment, all full-time, half time, part-time, temporary, and seasonal employees of the Vernon Area Public Library District must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19. "Fully vaccinated" means two weeks following the second dose of a two dose vaccine (Moderna or Pfizer) or two weeks following the receipt of a one dose vaccine (Johnson & Johnson), or as otherwise defined by the CDC. Employees will have to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine and will have until December 31, 2021 to submit proof of full vaccination This policy does not cover volunteers, patrons, and visitors.

Employees with start dates before December 1, 2021, may elect weekly testing in lieu of vaccination.

Newly hired employees with start dates on or after December 1, 2021, will be required to supply proof of vaccination or receive an approved exemption during the onboarding process. Employees who fail to do so may be terminated, subject to applicable law.

All employees who are not fully vaccinated will be required to take part in screening testing.

If an employee has not obtained the vaccine or fails to submit a weekly negative COVID-19 test result within the timeframes outlined below, the employee may not report to work on-site or access any of the Vernon Area Public Library District's facilities at any location owned, operated, or otherwise controlled by the Vernon Area Public Library District.

Employees working remotely are expected to observe these guidelines as a condition to accessing the Vernon Area Public Library District premises.

## Procedure

Employees should receive vaccines on their own. For help accessing a vaccination provider, employees should contact their healthcare provider, local pharmacy or contact the [Lake County Public Health Department](#). Vaccinations should be run through employees' health insurance where applicable or otherwise submitted for reimbursement if there is a cost.

All employees with start dates prior to December 1, 2021, will be granted paid time off work if necessary, to receive a first vaccination (series) and/or to recover from side effects of their vaccination(s) under the COVID Time paid leave policy. Employees are to work with their supervisors to schedule proper time to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine. Employees who need time off after their vaccine should follow appropriate policy for calling off of work due to illness. The Library will utilize its normal policies and procedures for handling time off related to illness under the Medical Leave Policy, or the COVID-Time Paid Leave Policy in the event Medical Leave is unavailable. Employees who cannot work due to side effects should follow normal procedures for calling off.

The Vernon Area Public Library District will provide employees who receive the COVID-19 vaccine with four (4) hours of Paid Time Off (PTO) to be used by January 14, 2022. Incentives and/or rewards may be regulated by law. The Vernon Area Public Library District will comply with all applicable federal, state, and/or local legal limitations on incentives and/or rewards.

To be compliant with this policy employees must do one of the following:

- Provide the [Human Resources Department](#) of the Vernon Area Public Library District with proof of vaccination within the specified timeframe. Proof of vaccination must include a copy of documentation showing the vaccine was received, but it should not include any personal health information or family medical history information; or
- Comply with the designated procedure for obtaining a permissible exemption as described in this policy.

## Reporting Vaccination

Employees are required to notify the Vernon Area Public Library District in an email to the [Head of Human Resources](#):

1. Yes, I have received the COVID-19 vaccine, attach proof of the vaccine in an email to [Human Resources](#). *(Vaccinated staff who have already provided*

*documentation of receiving the COVID-19 vaccine will not need to show proof again).*

2. No, I have not yet received the COVID-19 vaccine shot but will do so, advise [Human Resources](#) of the date of the final COVID-19 vaccination.
3. I am requesting an Exemption. *(If approved, the library will pay for all costs associated with weekly COVID-19 testing).*
4. No, I do not plan to receive the COVID-19 vaccine for personal reasons. I understand that I will be required to submit COVID-19 test results weekly to HR. All costs associated with testing are at my own expense.

## **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality and respect for our employees' rights are important to us. The Vernon Area Public Library District will not:

- use any genetic information, disability status or information regarding religious beliefs to disadvantage its employees in any way;
- use incentives in exchange for genetic information, information regarding an employee's health condition or that of their family, or information on the employee's religious beliefs; or
- try to coerce employees into supplying health/genetic/religious belief information or taking medical examinations.

The Head of Human Resources will have access to dashboards to check compliance. Records documenting vaccinations and declinations will be maintained by the Human Resource Department. All information received under this policy will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible. Sharing of information shall be based on a need-to-know basis and only to the level required to notify management personnel regarding those employees who are not in compliance with this policy or who are unvaccinated.

The Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) prohibits employers and other entities covered by GINA Title II from requesting or requiring genetic information of an individual or family member of the individual, except as specifically allowed by this law. To comply with this law, we are asking that employees not provide any genetic information when providing information in accordance with this policy. "Genetic information," as defined by GINA, includes an individual's family medical history, the results of an individual's or family member's genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual's family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

## Exemptions

Employees may request an exemption from the mandatory COVID-19 vaccine program by submitting an exemption request form, as outlined below, for:

1. disability/medical contraindications or precautions, or
2. a sincerely held religious belief. All employees should note that personal and/or philosophical objections to vaccinations are not considered sufficient justification for granting an exemption from the mandatory COVID-19 vaccine program.

Employees requesting exemption from the mandatory COVID-19 vaccine program are required to submit weekly testing results while their exemption is being considered.

Employees requesting exemptions from the required COVID-19 vaccine program due to a disability/medical contraindication/precaution or sincerely held religious belief must submit an exemption request form to [Human Resources](#). Human Resources will review each exemption request on an individual basis and consider approval of any such request. Human Resources may request additional information from employees requesting an exemption.

The following instructions should be followed, depending on type of exemption requested:

- [Disability/Medical Exemption](#): If an employee has a disability and/or medical condition that presents a contraindication to receiving a COVID-19 vaccine, they must complete the medical exemption request form and attach the relevant supporting medical documentation from their licensed treating provider as shown in the medical exemption form.
- [Religious Exemption](#): If an employee declines a COVID-19 vaccine because it conflicts with a sincerely held religious belief, the employee must complete the religious exemption request form. Employees may be asked to supply documentation that explains the specific faith-based teachings that oppose immunizations.

Designated personnel of the Vernon Area Public Library District will engage in an interactive dialogue with all employees requesting an exemption to determine if there is a reasonable accommodation that can be provided unless providing a reasonable accommodation would result in undue hardship to the Vernon Area Public Library District or poses a direct threat to the health and/or safety of others in the workplace and/or to the requesting employee. Human Resources will notify the employee, supervisor and/or department head of the decision about an exemption request.

All employees receiving an exemption are responsible for understanding and accepting of an exemption, which may include required work restrictions and regular COVID-19 testing.

After engaging in the interactive process, if the Vernon Area Public Library District is unable to provide a reasonable accommodation without causing undue hardship, the employee has sixty (60) days from notification of the denial of the exemption to comply by being vaccinated.

The Vernon Area Public Library District will only reconsider a denial if the employee supplies new information supporting their request. For reconsideration of a denial, please contact [Human Resources](#).

No employee requesting an exemption to the mandatory COVID-19 vaccine program will be discriminated against, harassed, or retaliated against for making such a request or being granted an exemption. If an employee believes that they have been treated in a manner contrary to this policy, please notify the [Human Resources](#) immediately.

### **COVID-19 Vaccine/Testing**

Employees who do not provide proof of vaccination will be regarded as unvaccinated for purposes of Covid-19 protocols. Unvaccinated employees are subject to the following Covid-19 protocols in addition to any other organization policies, procedures or practices related to Covid-19 that the organization may deem necessary:

- Wear a mask at all times when in the office, including while in common areas and while at your workstation or in your office, regardless of whether anyone else is present.
- Obtain a Covid-19 test once per week and submit the results to [Human Resources](#) following the library's established procedures.
- The COVID-19 test should be run through employees' health insurance where applicable or otherwise submitted for reimbursement if there is a cost AND the employee has received an approved exemption.
- Staff who have been granted an approved exemption by the library will be paid for their time to complete a weekly COVID-19 test.
- Staff who have not been granted an exemption are responsible for all costs associated with completing a weekly COVID-19 test; they will not be reimbursed for their time.

## **Consequences of Non-Compliance**

All persons covered under this policy shall be aware that compliance is a condition of employment and/or access to the Vernon Area Public Library District facilities. Employees who do not certify that they have received the COVID-19 vaccine are required to submit a weekly negative COVID test result or they will not have access to the Vernon Area Public Library District facilities.

Employees not in compliance with this policy will be placed on unpaid leave until their employment status is decided.

Thirty (30) days after the adoption of this policy, if the employee has not provided documentation of vaccination or completed an exemption, they may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **Right to Change or Terminate Policy**

If vaccine shortages occur and/or if CDC or government officials' recommendations are altered, the library may change, suspend, or revoke all or part of this policy.

## **Effective Date**

The effective date of this Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination/Testing Program Policy and New Hire Procedure is December 1, 2021. This policy supersedes the library's Voluntary COVID-19 Vaccination Policy.

*Adopted by Board of Trustees 11/15/2021*