

**Frequently asked questions for employees about the 2020-21 UC influenza vaccination order**  
*[Revised Oct. 27, 2020]*

**Q1. Is the flu vaccination requirement a permanent change to the Immunization Policy? Will those subject to the Executive Order be required to get the flu vaccine from now on?**

A1. No. The new requirement is based on the University's assessment of the current situation and will be revisited as the situation demands.

**Q2. To whom does the order apply?**

A2. The [Executive Order](#) mandates flu vaccination for all students, faculty, other academic appointees, and staff living, working, or learning at any UC location, subject only to medical exemptions. Individuals may also request disability and religious accommodations. If for any reason you believe you should receive an exception to the vaccination requirement, please contact your supervisor to be referred to the appropriate office to discuss whether you may be eligible.

**Q3. Why hasn't UC required flu immunizations of all faculty, other academic appointees, and staff in the past?**

A3. Faculty, other academic appointees, and staff working in the university's clinical facilities have long been required to participate in a flu immunization program. The additional action is needed at this time, given the unique and serious conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic in circulation simultaneously with influenza. The influenza vaccination requirement for those faculty, other academic appointees, and staff living or working on campus was deemed necessary to maintain a safe workplace. We also believe the Executive Order will contribute to the health of the entire community and ensure our health care systems and our communities are able to maintain capacity to care for our patients.

**Q4. Is there a penalty or consequence for faculty, other academic appointees, and staff if they do not get a flu shot?**

A4. Individuals who do not certify that they have received the 2020-2021 flu vaccine or have an approved exemption or accommodation will not have access to University facilities effective November 16, 2020. If the inability to access University facilities affects an employee's ability to perform job functions, supervisors will work with employees to find alternatives so they can continue to work.

**Q5. How will faculty, other academic appointees, and staff provide proof that they have received their flu shot?**

A5. All locations will be asked to adjust their symptom screening apps on or before November 1 to ask employees to certify they have received the 2020-2021 flu vaccine, have an approved exemption or accommodation, or have a pending request for an exemption or accommodation. Individual locations may adopt alternative local procedures.

**Q6. Are there any exemptions from the universal mandate?**

A6. Yes. Employees may request a medical exemption by having their health care provider complete the [Medical Exemption Request Form attached to the executive order](#), and then submitting the form to the designated campus official. If an employee is requesting a medical exemption or any other accommodation due to a disability, the employee should contact their local disability management office (who will coordinate with the local campus medical official as appropriate). Requests for religious accommodations will be handled through the interactive process consistent with local policies and procedures. Due to the severe risks posed by the confluence of influenza and COVID-19 this year, no other exceptions apply. However, if for any reason you believe you should receive an exception to the vaccination requirement, please contact your supervisor to be referred to the appropriate office to discuss whether you may be eligible.

**Q7. Will faculty, other academic appointees, or staff working remotely this fall need to document immunization by November 1?**

A7. If faculty, other academic appointees or staff working remotely need to access a UC facility at any time, they must certify by November 1 that they have received the 2020-2021 flu vaccine, have an approved exemption or accommodation, or have a pending request for an exemption or accommodation.

**Q8. When will this year's flu vaccine will be available?**

A8. The vaccine is available now in most locations. Anyone can get their flu vaccine at retail pharmacies near their homes or campuses or at their doctors' offices or medical clinics.

**Q9. What is the cost of the flu vaccinations for faculty, other academic appointees, or staff?**

A9. All Affordable Care Act-compliant medical insurance plans, including UC's employee health plans, cover influenza vaccination at no cost to the individual.

**Q10. If an employee does not have health insurance that covers the full cost of a vaccine, will UC reimburse the employee for the cost?**

A10. No. Please contact your county's public health department for information about the availability of free or low-cost flu vaccines.

**Q11. Will you be setting up flu vaccine clinics for faculty/other academic appointees/staff at UC locations that are not campuses (UCOP, Sacramento, Washington D.C., ANR, etc.)?**

A11. No. Due to public health requirements currently in place, this may not be possible at all locations. Faculty, other academic appointees and staff at any location can obtain the vaccine from a local pharmacy or their physician's office.

**Q12. If a faculty/other academic appointee/staff member does not get their flu vaccine, and therefore cannot enter UC facilities, can't they still work remotely?**

A12. Yes, if their supervisor determines their job does not require on-site presence. In fact, state and county orders generally require those who are not essential on-site workers to stay at home.

**Q13. What about faculty/other academic appointees/staff who have been strictly socially isolating due to being high-risk for COVID-19? Will they be forced to go to a health care facility or pharmacy to get a vaccine?**

A13. No, but we strongly recommend that they consult with their health care providers about the relative risks of foregoing the vaccine versus receiving it. However, to protect others they will not be admitted to campus facilities (except as patients), unless they have received the vaccine or an approved exemption or accommodation.

**Q14. Will hourly workers be granted time off to obtain the vaccine?**

A14. Policy covered hourly employees may take up to two hours of paid time. Employees must provide advance notice to their supervisor. The University is bargaining the effects of the new mandate with bargaining units; additional information will be made available when that activity is complete.

**Q15. Will this requirement apply to union-represented employees?**

A15. Yes. UCOP Labor Relations will bargain the effects of this new requirement with the systemwide unions prior to enforcement.

**Q16. Does this requirement apply to Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL)?**

A16. Yes, this policy applies to LBNL.

**Q17. Is November 1 a firm deadline for when faculty, other academic appointees, and staff must document they've received a flu vaccination or an approved exemption or accommodation?**

A17. This is a firm documentation deadline for students, faculty, other academic appointees, and staff who are currently living, learning, or working at a UC location. Individuals who do not document that they have received the 2020-2021 flu vaccine or have an approved exemption or accommodation will not have access to University facilities effective November 16, 2020. If you are currently remote but are later required or wish to access UC premises (other than as a patient) during the 2020-2021 flu season, you must first certify you have received the flu vaccine or an exemption or accommodation (or have a request for exemption or accommodation pending). Even if you continue to work or study remotely, everyone is encouraged to obtain the 2020-2021 vaccine consistent with CDC guidance and CDPH guidance, as well as recommendations from the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

**Q18. Are contractors covered by the new vaccine mandate?**

A18. Contractors who are UC employees are covered by the new flu vaccine mandate. Independent contractors, vendors, and other visitors are not covered, but are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated. *[Note: access to campuses by non-affiliates is restricted under State and Local health orders.]*

**Q19. Does this requirement apply to visiting scholars and visiting students?**

A19. Yes. One of the main purposes of the vaccine mandate is to reduce the risks of being on campus, and it applies to *all* students, faculty, other academic appointees, and staff living, learning, or working on premises at any UC location. The requirement is not premised on whether a person is a paid employee, but rather whether they are a student, member of the faculty, other academic appointee or staff entering a UC facility. Accordingly, the requirement does apply to visiting scholars and visiting students.

**Q20. Does this requirement apply to children enrolled in UC day care centers or K-12 schools?**

A20. No, the [Executive Order](#) does not apply to those children, however these day care centers and schools are subject to state laws governing mandatory vaccinations and campuses may implement similar mandates, consistent with recommendations from the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

**Q21. What is the deadline to receive the flu vaccine?**

A21. The deadline is November 1, 2020, for those who are required or wish to access UC premises, and subject to requests for exemption or accommodation. You will be denied access to UC premises effective November 16, 2020, unless you bring yourself into compliance. However, all members of the UC community are strongly encouraged to receive the flu vaccine.

**Q22. How can employees get the flu vaccine?**

A22. Anyone can get their flu vaccine at retail pharmacies near their homes or campuses or their doctor's offices or medical clinics.

**Q23. I am afraid of getting a shot. May I opt out?**

A23. Please speak with your health care provider about your options. Many people can get vaccinated with a nasal spray rather than a shot. Fear alone is not a basis for a medical exemption or accommodation.

**Q24. What other immunizations does UC policy require of employees?**

A24. There is no other systemwide policy on immunization of employees. Clinical locations, day care centers, certain research labs, and other campus locations have adopted mandates consistent with federal and state law and local public health directives.

**Q25. Will UC require employees to get a COVID-19 vaccine when one is developed and available?**

A25. UC looks forward to the development of an effective vaccine for SARS-CoV-2. Vaccines are in development and only recently are being tested in human trials. UC is monitoring progress and may update its immunization policy in consultation with the California Department of Public Health and our own internal experts as new vaccines are approved by the FDA and recommendations for use are adopted by the CDC.