



MEMORANDUM

Date: May 12, 2022

To: The Honorable Chair and Members
Pima County Board of Supervisors

From: Jan Lester
County Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jan Lester", is written over the printed name of the County Administrator.

Re: **Updated COVID-19 Related Employee Guidance**

The unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 pandemic forced most employers, including Pima County, to revise the guidance for workplace safety and security they provided to employees. This was done with the dual goal of protecting the workforce and the public they served. As we move into the endemic phase of the COVID-19 challenge it is appropriate to identify and modify those actions and practices that should continue and to cease those that are no longer necessary or appropriate based on the existing evidence. It also provides an opportunity to reframe our expectation for the conduct of business on the part of our employees.

The comprehensive COVID-19 policy review that we have undertaken has identified the following Human Resources topics, which have been updated below.

Safe Conduct of Pima County Operations

Human Resources has summarized best practices and expectations for employees throughout the Pima County. These include specific guidance for a range of work-related settings (Attachment 1), as well as updated new isolation and post exposure practices.

In general however, we continue to encourage all Pima County employees to be vaccinated and boosted. Additionally, employees should not be physically present in work environments when they are sick, and should leave the work environment promptly should they become ill while at work.

COVID Isolation & Post-Exposure Quarantine Guidelines

Any employee who has a positive COVID-19 test is required to notify his/her supervisor (or departmental personnel representative). They are also required to remain at home (isolate) for five (5) days regardless of vaccination status. Those who are fever free (for 24 hours) and asymptomatic may return to work no sooner than day six (6). Mask use will be required through day ten (10). (Attachment 2)

After a credible or suspected exposure to COVID, employees who are fully vaccinated and boosted are not required to quarantine if they are without symptoms. Testing should occur if an employee becomes symptomatic or no sooner than day five (5) after exposure. Mask use and symptom monitoring will be required through day ten (10).

Post exposure, employees who are unvaccinated (as well as those not fully vaccinated or boosted) may return to work no sooner than day six (6). Testing should occur if symptoms develop or no sooner than day five (5). Upon returning to work, mask use and symptom monitoring continues through day ten (10). No work related travel will be allowed prior to the end of day ten (10).

Vaccination Surcharge

With the Board's approval, Human Resources implemented a surcharge for those employees who failed to provide documentation of COVID vaccination. The intent was to offset the incremental health-related costs that Pima County as a self-insured entity must bear for that segment of population, as well as to provide an additional disincentive that would motivate vaccination.

At this time, it is too early to assess the economic impact this has had on the County's employee-related health expenditures, especially as we begin to see the impacts of long COVID-19. I would recommend that these be continued for an additional year, and that an analysis of both acute and long-term costs be performed in six (6) months, to inform any future decision.

Other Vaccination Related Actions

Effective immediately, all employees including individuals lacking proof of COVID-19 vaccination may resume the following activities:

- Outside employment approved by the appointing authority in adherence with relevant administrative procedures.
- In-person participation in work-related activities including meetings, and in and out of state travel.
- County vehicle use and co-occupancy.
- Unrestricted leisure activity and travel.

JKL/dym

Attachments

- c: Francisco García, MD, MPH, Deputy County Administrator for Health and Community Services & Chief Medical Officer
Carmine DeBonis, Jr., Deputy County Administrator for Public Works
Terry Cullen, MD, MS, Public Health Director, Pima County Health Department
Cathy Bohland, Director, Human Resources