

## VACCINE MANDATE FAQs

### **Why is NCH mandating all employees, staff, contractors, and volunteers be vaccinated?**

NCH has a duty to provide and maintain a workplace free of recognized hazards and to protect the health and safety of our patients, families, employees, volunteers, contractors, and anyone who enters one of our many locations from infectious viruses such as COVID. To that end, mandatory vaccination is one way we can continue to keep our community safe.

### **When does this policy go into effect?**

The policy goes into effect immediately, employees have until September 16, 2021 to be fully vaccinated. For those individuals who are not vaccinated, they must receive their first vaccine shot by August 16, 2021, and their second shot by September 13, 2021.

### **What is the reason behind the vaccine mandate?**

The vaccine dramatically reduces the spread of COVID. Getting vaccinated is important as we play our part in stopping the spread of this virus and the many variants that scientists are telling us will follow. We reached this decision after much research, analysis, and discussion in and outside the community. Many health care facilities and companies have similar policies being put in place for the protection of ourselves and our community.

### **Why is the Delta variant so concerning?**

The Delta variant is quickly becoming the predominant variant in the U.S. and many other parts of the world. Data shows the Delta variant spreads more quickly and is five times more contagious than previous strands. In addition, it is infecting younger individuals and largely among the unvaccinated.

### **Are vaccines effective against the Delta variant?**

Data indicates that vaccination provides more than 90% protection from infection. The vaccines have been shown to be effective against the Delta variant and others.

### **Are there any exemptions to this mandatory policy?**

Yes, anyone who has a religious or medical exemption will be exempt from this policy; however, they will be required to get weekly PCR swabs and wear an N95 mask at all times.

### **Do I have to be vaccinated to visit an NCH facility?**

While we encourage all our patients to be vaccinated, it is not a requirement for treatment. Anyone in our community is welcome to visit any of our NCH facilities. COVID protocols are in place, and we have had zero cases of patient-to-patient or provider-to-patient transmission. We are being diligent to ensure our facilities are safe and available to anyone regardless of their vaccination status.