



Important Update re: COVID-19

from Gil Fonger, President & CEO

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- **VACCINE OR TEST OPTION PUSHED TO 9/19/21**

Gov. Pritzker's Executive Order that gives all staff the option to choose whether to get vaccinated or be regularly tested has been pushed back to the week of Sept. 19. In addition, the Illinois Dept. of Public Health (IDPH) has made new requirements regarding testing procedures for unvaccinated staff at long-term-care facilities. Therefore, **each week** starting the week of the 19th, **any unvaccinated employees working at any Marklund location—residential and school—will need to provide proof of a PCR test taken at an offsite location. The tests will need to be completed on the employee's own time and at his or her own expense if a co-pay is required at the testing site.** Visit the IDPH website to review the list of state-supported COVID-19 testing sites, which are free (<https://www.dph.illinois.gov/testing>). **The testing requirement may be increased to more often if we see a rise in positive cases or if IDPH or ISBE (IL State Board of Education) recommend more frequent testing.** This new procedure will replace the regular surveillance testing offered on-site at Marklund.

Those who receive at least the first dose of the vaccine prior to Sept. 19, will only need to do on-site rapid testing. If a second dose is required it must be done within 30 days.

Failure to be tested or produce required documentation will result in an unpaid suspension and developmental action, up to and including termination.

Please note that these requirements may change based on guidelines for the federal COVID-19 vaccine mandate which are expected to be released by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) by the end of the month.

- **PROPER PPE USAGE REMINDER**

Along with the vaccine, **following proper masking** procedures also works to prevent the spread of the virus. This means having the mask completely pinched above the nose and resting below the mouth. Masks must be worn at all times indoors, the only exceptions being when at your workspace and six feet from all others, or while eating/drinking and maintaining six-foot distance. Masks must always be worn walking through a Marklund facility. Improper adherence to this procedure has resulted in Development Action.

- **COVID VACCINES AVAILABLE THROUGH MARKLUND**

Another reminder: Employees who wish to get the Pfizer or Johnson & Johnson COVID vaccine may do so at Marklund. Appointments must be made through Jackie Ott, Lead DT Nurse, at the Hyde Center's CDS office (jott@marklund.org). If we see a large interest, we will be able to offer another on-site clinic prior to the September 19 deadline date.

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