



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Washington, DC 20415

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The Director

October 6, 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

FROM: KIRAN A. AHUJA
Director

Subject: Administrative Leave for New, Updated COVID-19 Vaccine

Following actions by the Food and Drug Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Biden Administration announced on September 8, 2022, its [“Plan to Get Americans an Updated COVID-19 Vaccine Shot and Manage COVID-19 this Fall.”](#) As part of the plan, the Biden Administration is urging all Americans to get their updated COVID-19 vaccine shot this fall. The updated vaccine provides the strongest available protection from the Omicron strain of the COVID virus, which did not exist when the original vaccine was developed. Everyone age 12 years and older is eligible for these updated vaccines if it has been at least 2 months since completion of their primary vaccination series or their most recent booster.

Given the potential for infections to increase in the fall and winter, it is critical that Americans get a new, updated COVID-19 vaccine to stay protected. The Biden Administration launched a comprehensive effort to make sure that these updated vaccines are free, widely available, and easy to access for all Americans. Over 90 percent of Americans have at least one location with these new vaccines available within five miles of their home.

To further that comprehensive effort, OPM is issuing this guidance to agencies regarding administrative leave for employees to receive their updated COVID-19 vaccine. Consistent with previous guidance from OPM and the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force regarding administrative leave related to COVID-19 vaccination, agencies must grant leave-eligible employees up to 4 hours of administrative leave to receive the updated COVID-19 vaccine (as well as primary series doses, which remain available to unvaccinated individuals). The administrative leave will cover the time it takes to travel to the vaccination site, receive the COVID-19 vaccine dose, and return to work.

In addition, based on President Biden’s direction that the Federal Government should work aggressively to maximize the number of people receiving the updated COVID-19 vaccine, agencies must also continue to grant administrative leave to Federal employees who accompany their family members who are receiving the updated COVID-19 vaccine (as well as primary series doses and other authorized additional COVID-19 vaccine doses). For this purpose, a “family member” is an individual who meets the definition of that term in OPM’s leave regulations (see 5 CFR 630.201).

If an employee needs less than 4 hours, only the needed amount of administrative leave should be granted. Employees should obtain advance approval from their supervisor before using administrative leave for purposes of obtaining the COVID-19 vaccine. Employees may not be credited with administrative leave or overtime work for time spent outside their tour of duty getting the COVID-19 vaccine or accompanying a family member to get the COVID-19 vaccine. This guidance on the use of administrative leave applies to any authorized dose of COVID-19 vaccine that is not required by the agency. For those employees who are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19 by their agency pursuant to agency-specific vaccination requirements, agencies must allow employees to undertake required COVID-19 vaccine doses on duty time.

Consistent with guidance issued by the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force, an agency should also grant up to 2 workdays of administrative leave if an employee has an adverse reaction to a COVID-19 vaccine dose that prevents the employee from working (i.e., no more than 2 workdays for reactions associated with a single dose). If an employee requests more than 2 workdays to recover, the employee may take other appropriate leave (e.g., sick leave) to cover any additional absence.

Vaccine related leave can be found within the [Safer Federal Workforce Task Force Frequently Asked Questions](#).

Previously OPM-issued memorandums on administrative leave that are still in effect are noted below:

- [CPM2022-10](#): COVID-19 Vaccination of Children Over 6 Months of Age
- [CPM2021-25](#): Leave policies related to COVID-19 Vaccination Boosters
- [CPM2021-23](#): COVID-19 Vaccination of Children Ages 5 and Older

Additional Information

Agency headquarters-level human resources offices may contact OPM at pay-leave-policy@opm.gov. Component-level human resources offices must contact their agency headquarters for assistance. Because the granting of administrative leave is administered by employing agencies, employees must contact their agency human resources for further information regarding this matter.

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers (CHCOs), Deputy CHCOs, Human Resources Directors, and Work-Life Coordinators