

23 July 2021

**TO: RAILS Board of Directors**

**FROM: Deirdre Brennan**

**SUBJECT: Board members and RAILS vaccine policy**

At the June meeting, the RAILS board approved a vaccine policy for RAILS staff; this policy is included in the packet. The board also agreed that board members should adhere to this policy. We are bringing this issue to the new board and hope that the board will agree and formally vote on the issue. Thank you.



## **VOLUNTARY COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAM POLICY**

### **Purpose**

RAILS recognizes its responsibility to provide employees a workplace free of recognized hazards. This voluntary policy is intended to help maximize the protection afforded by the COVID-19 vaccine. The goal of this program is to protect employees, employees' family members, customers, patrons, visitors, others affiliated with us and the broader community.

Participation in RAILS's voluntary COVID-19 vaccine program has many benefits. Providing a safe and healthy work environment helps employees be more productive and can reduce the number of sick days employees take due to exposure to COVID-19. But, most importantly, employee wellness is a vital aspect of building a happier workplace.

This policy will follow all applicable laws and is based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the State of Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH).

### **Scope**

This voluntary COVID-19 vaccine program policy applies to all employees. Employees are strongly encouraged to receive COVID-19 vaccinations as soon as they are eligible under applicable federal, state, or local plan.

### **Incentive for Vaccination**

RAILS wants to encourage all employees to take part in this voluntary COVID-19 vaccine program, and to further that goal will provide employees who receive the full COVID-19 vaccine with a ½ day's pay (3.75 hours) to be used by December 31, 2021. This incentive retroactively applies to those who have already been fully vaccinated.

As an additional benefit to those employees who become fully vaccinated, RAILS will not require employees who provide acceptable proof of their full vaccinations to wear masks when working at a RAILS' facility. You may continue to wear a mask, particularly if you are attending a meeting, at your option. Those who have not been vaccinated must continue to abide with our current procedures, which require wearing a mask when away from one's desk or when near another person.

RAILS will comply with all applicable federal, state, and/or local legal limitations on incentives and/or rewards.

### **Procedures**

Employees should visit <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/vaccination-location> for a list of locations to aid in receiving vaccines on their own or contact the Illinois Public Health Department at (833) 621-1284 to schedule an appointment. Employees may also be able to

obtain vaccine availability information from their own health care providers. Vaccinations should be run through employees' health insurance where applicable.

The submission to Human Resources of a copy of your CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card will serve as sufficient evidence of your vaccination to receive the incentive offered by RAILS. Please do not submit any other evidence that contains any other medical or genetic history.

### **Accommodations**

RAILS wants all its employees to have equal access to all benefits and resources offered by RAILS. Accordingly, RAILS can make reasonable accommodations for employees with disabilities to help them have equal access to the voluntary COVID-19 vaccine program. The same applies to employees who cannot take part in the voluntary COVID-19 vaccine program due to sincerely held religious beliefs. We encourage our employees to reach out to the Human Resources Department to discuss their need for an accommodation and options. These discussions and any relevant information will be kept confidential.

### **Confidentiality**

Confidentiality and respect to our employees' rights are important to us. RAILS will not:

- use any genetic information, disability status, or religious beliefs/information to disadvantage its employees in any way;
- use incentives in exchange for genetic information, information regarding an employee's health condition or that of their family, or information about an employee's religious beliefs; or
- try to coerce employees into supplying health/genetic/religious belief information or taking medical examinations.

### **Voluntary participation; No Retaliation**

RAILS encourages employees to participate in the voluntary COVID-19 vaccine program but any such participation is voluntary. There will not be any discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or adverse action for employees who choose not to participate in the voluntary COVID-19 vaccine program.

### **Duration of Voluntary COVID-19 Vaccine Program**

RAILS will continue to monitor the current public health situation and reserves the right to make changes to this policy based on the most current information available by the CDC, government, or local public health officials. Likewise, RAILS may, at its discretion, implement a mandatory COVID-19 vaccine program to ensure the safety and welfare of its employees and/or its business needs.

Please direct any questions about this policy to the Human Resources Department.