

# The flu is serious.

## Don't pass it on

Protect yourself, our patients and everyone around you!

### The 2015 Healthy Workforce Vaccination Program Flu Mandate Information

**Public Health Department Flu Mandate:** San Diego County Department of Public Health has mandated that health care workers be vaccinated for influenza or wear a surgical mask while working in patient care areas during flu season. The mandate applies to each “flu season” and defines each season’s length as November 1 to March 31 of the following year.

Employees who are not vaccinated by November 1, 2015 must begin wearing a mask.

**Definition of Health Care Worker:** The requirement affects our hospital and medical office buildings in the San Diego Service Area. All employees, contract workers, students, volunteers, and physicians working in these facilities are required to be vaccinated or wear a mask in all patient care areas as a Condition of Employment. HR Policy 5.09 defines Health Care Worker as follows.

**4.0 Definitions 4.1 Health Care Worker (HCW):** An employee who:

- 4.1.1** works at a Medical Center or Medical Office Building (i.e., is assigned to work at a Medical Center or Medical Office Building); and/or
- 4.1.2** has duties that require a regular presence at a Medical Center or Medical Office Building (50% or more of work time); and/or
- 4.1.3** has direct contact with patients and/or patient specimens.

Managers working at locations or who have employees not covered under the county mandate are responsible for strongly encouraging employees to be vaccinated.

Regional employees who have duties that require a regular presence (50% or more of work time) at a medical center or medical office building are considered health care workers. They are required to wear a mask in patient care areas when working in our mandated facilities if they have not had a flu shot.

**Definition of Patient Care Areas:** Patient care areas include the physical or recognized borders of hospital and clinic areas where patients are present, evaluated, or treated; including waiting rooms, reception/waiting areas, and patient care hallways.

The mandate exempts cafeterias, non-patient restrooms, break-rooms, lounges, meeting rooms, lab testing areas, areas where there is no member contact, and administrative suites/offices.

**Surgical Mask Guidelines:** Masks should be changed when they become moist from breathing or damaged. Masks should be changed between Isolation Precaution patients. Masks should be replaced after removal from the face. Once removed from the face, masks will not be reused, hung around the neck, on top of the head or in a pocket. The frequency with which masks may need to be changed will vary based on how much moisture is generated from breathing. A mask must not be worn longer than four hours. Employees are not allowed to adorn or decorate their mask.

# The flu is serious.

## Don't pass it on

Protect yourself, our patients and everyone around you!

**Declination:** Employees who decline vaccination for medical reasons are still required to mask. The 2015-2016 Declination form will be distributed the first week in January 2016. All physicians, contractors, volunteers and employees who refuse influenza vaccination must:

- Begin wearing a surgical mask in Patient Care Areas **November 1, 2015**.
- Sign the Influenza Declination by **March 31, 2016** as required under SB739 and the California Department of Public Health at the conclusion of the 2015 -2016 Influenza season.

Attestation forms which previously indicated an employee received vaccination outside of Kaiser Permanente **are no longer accepted**. Per HR policy 5.09

**5.2.1.2** Employees who receive current flu vaccinations at a non-KP facility **will be required to present a written receipt (including the date the vaccination was received)** of required influenza vaccine(s) to EHS.

**Compliance:** All employees, contract workers, students, volunteers, and physicians (HCWs) are required to be vaccinated for influenza or will be required to wear a mask in all patient care areas as a **Condition of Employment** or continued association with Kaiser Permanente per HR Policy 5.09.

Managers and Physician Chiefs of Service are responsible for monitoring compliance for their staff and physicians. Corrective Action will be used for non-physician employees:

### Flu Vaccination Program Timeline:

1. **September 14, 2015** EHS workforce vaccination program begins (Contingent on vaccine availability).
2. **November 1, 2015:** All unvaccinated Health Care Workers must wear masks in patient care areas through March 31, 2016 per SD County Health Order.
3. **December 31, 2015:** The conclusion of the PSP & VPP performance monitoring period.
4. **January 2016:** Influenza Declination distributed to Service Area.
5. **March 31, 2016:** All Kaiser Permanente physicians, employees, contractors and volunteers, regardless of Health Care Worker status, must have either been vaccinated for influenza or have signed an Influenza Declination form and submitted to EHS.

Protect yourself and others from the Flu