



## PARISH FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS RELATED TO COVID-19 UPDATED MARCH 2022

### **As an Archdiocesan location, should I be requesting vaccination status from employees, students or volunteers?**

- Parish locations should not collect vaccination status information from employees or volunteers who do not work with children under the age of 18.
- Individuals who work with children to include all school personnel, catechists, youth ministers, faith formation, clergy or religious order who are on school site on a regular basis, to include, coaches, extended care and preschool staff, must attest their vaccination status by completing the Archdiocesan form. If the individual is unvaccinated or chooses not to share their vaccination status, they must test weekly. Testing costs are covered by the location.
- Students are currently not required to provide vaccination status unless they are currently participating in an athletic program. If they are an athlete and are unvaccinated, they must test weekly. Review the new state mandate for details related to future vaccination requirements.

### **When do employees have to wear their mask in the parish office or in the church?**

- Masks are no longer required in Archdiocesan parish offices regardless of an individual's vaccination status. Although an individual may choose to continue to utilize personal protective equipment as a personal precaution.
- As an extra precaution, although not required, it is recommended that a mask be worn during an indoor or outdoor event where a large amount of people, outside of your household are present and where social distancing is not possible.
- Please note effective March 12, 2022 (March 14, 2022 for all preschool, elementary and secondary schools in the Archdiocese), all students in a school or educational environment (faith formation, religious education classes and youth ministry) regardless of their vaccination status are no longer required to wear masks indoors. The personal choice to wear a mask as a precaution will be determined by the student and/or their parents and will not be influenced by the staff or volunteers. Staff and volunteers must be sensitive to an individual's personal choice to wear or not wear a mask.
- Please be advised the location cannot mandate a mask requirement for students/participants. The new Archdiocesan mask initiative for students is in alignment with the state mandates, therefore all schools and youth catechetical programs (faith formation, religious education and youth ministry) must follow the new Archdiocesan protocol at all times, ensuring all social distancing protocols are also followed accordingly where children preschool, TK-12 are present.

### **Can we meet as a group?**

- Yes, ensuring everyone is following the social distancing protocols. If there is food and beverage, it is recommended, although not required, that all employees or participants remain six feet apart.

### **Who do I need to notify if an employee or clergy tests positive for COVID-19?**

- All who have been in contact with an infected individual for more than 15 minutes within 2 days of the individual testing positive.
- If three or more test positive for COVID-19 within a 14-day period, it must be reported to your Local County Health Department. San Francisco County no longer requires this protocol for locations that are not an educational institution. All educational institutions within the Archdiocese (preschools, TK-12) must follow this reporting requirement as mandated by the state of California.
- The case must be reported to the Archdiocese of San Francisco HR Department. Please contact Janice Ward at wardj@sfarch.org
- If an employee tests positive for COVID-19, the Guide One Form (SB 1159 COVID-19 Reporting Form – CA), must be completed and submitted to Guide One our workers' compensation carrier in all instances.

### **What if I have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19?**

- If you are vaccinated watch for symptoms ensuring you are practicing all social distancing requirements. It is recommended, although not required, to wear a mask up to five (5) days after exposure and wash your hands regularly. Although not required, it is recommended that you test 3 – 5 days after exposure. You are able to continue working.
- If you are unvaccinated, you must quarantine for five days from the date of exposure. You may be eligible to use the new 2022 State Paid Supplemental sick leave (effective February 19, 2022), your ADSF sick time and any personal accrued time. All state and local COVID-19 related leaves will be in effect through September 30, 2022.
- The parish is responsible for all costs associated for testing if the exposure occurred in the workplace. All parishes must set up a testing site for their location.

### **Is there any COVID-19 paid sick leave available for an individual or a family member who tests positive?**

- Yes, effective February 19, 2022, the new California supplemental paid sick leave related to COVID-19 went into effect and will be retroactive to all cases effective January 1, 2022.
- With the new 2022 leave, an employee may be eligible for up to ten (10) days of leave if the employee or a family member meets the criteria. Please contact the Benefits Department of the Archdiocese for more information.

### **When can an employee return to work after having testing positive for COVID-19?**

- At least 5 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, and at least 24 hours have passed with no fever (without use of fever-reducing medications), and other symptoms have improved.

### **Does an employee who had COVID-19 have to take a test to ensure the test is negative before they can return to work?**

- No, since employees who have recovered from COVID-19 can continue to have detectable SARS-CoV-2 RNA in upper respiratory specimens for up to 3 months after illness onset.

## **Is the Archdiocese mandating vaccinations for its employees and clergy at this time?**

- No, it is based on personal medical advice and an individual's conscience.

### **As stated on the Archdiocesan website.**

*While everyone has a duty to preserve his or her own life and to act in accord with the common good, medical treatment should, in principle, be voluntary. No one should ever be forced to undergo any medical treatment, including vaccination.*

*While the available vaccines do not provide 100% protection against transmission and infection of COVID-19, and in particular against the so-called "Delta variant," they do still provide a significant degree of protection and greatly reduce the risk of hospitalization and even death should breakthrough infection occur. For these reasons, Pope Francis, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Archbishop Cordileone have all encouraged Catholics, in consultation with their doctors, to make use of the COVID-19 vaccines as an effective means of preventing COVID-19.*

## **Can I ask if an individual is vaccinated?**

- No, currently this information is protected and you cannot ask if a person is vaccinated. For schools, religious education, youth ministry and sports programs, only, the individual identified as the safety officer may have access to vaccination status. All attestation forms are to be safeguarded (i.e., kept in a secure and locked cabinet).

## **What supplies are we required to have available on-site at all times?**

- N-95 masks
- Antibacterial hand soap and paper towels
- Hand sanitizer in high touch areas
- Required state and county COVID-19 postings

Please note: The Chancery currently has a limited supply of N-95 masks and test-kits provided for the employees at our Archdiocesan locations courtesy of RETA Trust. Please contact the Human Resources department for more details.

Locations are welcome to pick-up supplies from the Chancery or, in some cases, we may be able to deliver them to your location. Please contact the Archdiocesan Human Resources department for more details.

## **Are we required to do on-site health screenings?**

- Employees may self-check prior to coming to work.
- If an employee feels sick or is exhibiting any symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g., fever of 100.4 degrees and above, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting or diarrhea) the employee is to stay home.

## **I have members of staff that are not following the COVID-19 safety protocols. What should I do?**

- Remind your employee of the requirements ensuring we all work together to keep each other safe from COVID-19. If you have verbally reminded the employee of the protocol and the individual continues to defy the safety requirement, you should begin the progressive discipline process.

### **How do I inform our employees we have had a positive case on-site?**

- First, inform those who were in contact with an infected individual for 15 minutes or more within two days of that person testing positive. **Please be careful not to reveal the infected individual's name.** Review the procedures of what to do regardless of one's vaccination status.
- Send a letter within 24 hours of being notified of the positive case, notifying all staff to include employees, volunteers and clergy of the exposure. A sample letter is in your parish's COVID-19 Prevention Plan (CPP). **Please note** the parish should not publicize an exposure that occurred among the parish staff to the general parish community.
- If the exposure occurred in a school, religious education, youth ministry or sports programs, the school or program families must be notified.

### **Is my parish required to have a COVID-19 Prevention Plan (CPP)?**

- Yes, all locations are required to have a CPP that is specific to their respective locations. Schools are required to post their completed CPP on their website.

### **What if an employee is requesting special accommodations to work remotely or to take a leave related to COVID-19?**

- The employee must complete a request for accommodation or request for leave form and submit it to the Pastor, Principal or Site Administrator for consideration, and if approved, the location will send the form to the Archdiocesan Benefits Department for processing.

### **What if the employee's spouse, children or parent has recently tested positive for COVID-19 and requires care?**

- The Archdiocesan request for leave process is to be followed. In limited circumstances, the pastor may determine if the employee will be allowed to work remotely through the duration of the leave.
- An employee may also be eligible for the California 2022 Supplemental Paid Sick Leave in order to care for a family member if they meet the criteria.

### **If I have any questions or need further resources who do, I contact?**

- The Archdiocesan Human Resources staff is available to assist at any time. You can also contact Derek Gaskin, the Archdiocesan Director of Safety and Security. The Chancery phone number is 415-614-5500.