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## Vaccine Eligibility & Sign-up

Effective March 17, 2021, all *Public Employees, Public-Facing* are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. The definition of *Public Employees, Public-Facing* applies to all paid employees (part time or full time) who work in Association, Municipal, School District or Special Legislative District libraries.

Member librarians should visit the NYS COVID-19 Vaccine Eligibility website to verify eligibility status and begin the sign-up process.

<https://am-i-eligible.covid19vaccine.health.ny.gov/>

The website will ask a series of questions to determine a librarian's eligibility. Member librarians should select the following option when asked to enter, "Additional Information".

Are you a public-facing government or public employee? \*

☒ Yes ☐ No

SUNY Corning Community College is listed as our region's most central New York State-operated vaccination location. You will need to select a location, and click on the link that says, "Schedule Your Appointment". The website will then take you through the process of making an appointment and providing required or relevant information.

County health departments are also holding vaccine clinics throughout the library system's five counties. Librarians should visit their county's department of health website to determine where and when the next round of vaccines take place.

[Allegany County DOH](#)

[Chemung County DOH](#)

[Schuyler County DOH](#)

[Steuben County DOH](#)

[Yates County DOH](#)

*"Proof of eligibility is required at every clinic. Eligible essential workers must bring proof of employment at an eligible agency with them to the clinic, those who are eligible by age must*

*bring an ID with date of birth, and those eligible by health condition must bring either a note from their healthcare provider or utilize the attestation form found on Public Health's page."*

*-Steuben County Department of Health*

A recent paycheck stub with organizational (library) identity will suffice. A letter, on library letterhead, signed by the library director or board president can also serve as proof.

Additional clinic information...

*All clinic attendees must wear appropriate face coverings and will be expected to wait 15-30 minutes after vaccination for observation. Attendees should wear short sleeves or appropriate clothing for vaccination. For safe clinic flow and traffic patterns, registered participants should come to the clinic at their appointment time. The clinic location and parking cannot accommodate participants showing up early.*

*Residents currently under isolation or quarantine at the time of the clinic due to a positive COVID-19 test result or as a contact to a positive are not eligible to attend the clinic. Due to limited vaccine supply, those who have been COVID-positive within 90 days prior to the clinic are not currently eligible.*

*-Steuben County Department of Health*

### **Paid Leave for COVID Vaccinations**

All paid employees (part time and full time) are eligible for paid leave to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. The New York State Department of Labor (NYS DOL) has put together a helpful *Question & Answer* document explaining this new legislation that took effect March 12, 2021.

See the attached Addendum, *Paid Leave for COVID Vaccinations* published by NYS DOL

### **Requiring Vaccines as a Condition of Employment**

The U.S. Employment Equal Opportunity Commission (EEOC) issued guidance to employers on December 16, 2020 on whether or not they could require employees to receive a COVID-19 vaccine as a condition of employment.

[Click here for, What You Should Know About COVID-19 and the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and Other EEO Laws published by the EEOC.](#)

While the EEOC did state it could be legal for employers to make this as a condition of employment, employers should be careful about how they convey or implement such a requirement considering the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act.

Additionally, Empire State Library Network's *Ask the Lawyer* service did answer this question on December 18, 2020 just after the EEOC issued guidance. The *Ask the Lawyer* service does do a good job of talking through the complexities of requiring vaccines as a condition of employment.

[Click here for, \*Can a public library compel staff members to get vaccinations for COVID-19?\* published by ESLN's Ask the Lawyer.](#)

Southern Tier Library System encourages directors and trustees to consider the current state of the COVID-19 pandemic, and its vaccine rollout when assisting employees with obtaining access to the vaccine. Here are some points for consideration...

1. We are just slowly rolling out of a 12-month global pandemic.
2. Everyone has accumulated professional and personal challenges that are still being sorted.
3. Employees are entitled to medical confidentiality and reasonable accommodations under state and federal laws.
4. It is going to take many more months before the entire U.S. population has access to vaccines.

We hope directors and trustees will take the approach of providing as much reliable and helpful information as possible about vaccines to their paid employees (i.e. information about the different types of vaccines, how to sign-up for vaccines, where vaccines are taking place, etc.). This type of information campaign will give employees the resources and time they need for full consideration.

Requiring employees to get vaccinated when they just became eligible on March 17, 2021 does not set the tone for a healthy or mindful work environment. Additionally, recent polls demonstrate more Americans are showing a willingness to get vaccinated. This doesn't mean all library employees will want to get vaccinated, but it does indicate the likelihood of a person getting vaccinated will increase when they are provided the opportunity to make the decision on their own.

Libraries should be patient and work with employees who elect to take NYS Paid Leave for COVID Vaccinations. Directors and trustees can do this by helping employees provide proof of eligibility to vaccine clinics, and developing procedures for requesting time off to receive vaccinations.

## **Documenting Paid Leave for Vaccines & Logging Vaccinated Employees**

Libraries can utilize NYS Paid Leave for COVID Vaccinations as means for logging the number of employees who have obtained the vaccination. This can be done when an employee notes on their time sheet reason for paid time off. Or if the library requires notice for paid time off.

It is important libraries minimize the amount of information they retain about an employee getting vaccinated, and that any information they do retain is filed in the employee's confidential medical file (this is a file specific to the employee and separate from their personnel file).

Other items of information that might be collected in an employee's confidential medical file are emergency contact information, request for paid or unpaid medical leaves of absence, physician-signed Family Medical and Leave Act paperwork, accident or injury reports, or physician notes detailing job restrictions or needs for reasonable accommodations.

Again, Empire State Library Network's *Ask the Lawyer* service does a good job of discussing how a library might request proof of vaccination, log such information and provide a safe work environment for vaccinated and non-vaccinated employees.

[Click here for, \*Proof of Vaccination from Employees\* published by ESLN's Ask the Lawyer.](#)