

**State of South Dakota
Flu Vaccination Initiative Questions and Answers**

1. Who is required to get a flu vaccination?

- All state-employed personnel in state institutions including the Human Services Center in Yankton, the South Dakota Developmental Center in Redfield, the South Dakota Veterans Home in Hot Springs, and staff of the State Public Health Laboratory in Pierre;
- All state-employed personnel providing direct health care services to a prisoner; client or patient in a correctional, clinic, office, home, or other setting; or any state-employed personnel whose routine work duties brings them into direct contact with a client or patient in a patient or client care area; and
- All state-employed personnel entering a licensed healthcare facility on a routine basis as part of their job responsibilities.
- All state-employed personnel identified by their employer as meeting the close/direct contact.
- Each state agency shall ensure that all contract staff, vendors, students, supervising faculty, or volunteers providing services in any setting described above, provide documentation to the state agency that they are vaccinated against influenza or meet one of the exemptions.

2. Is proof of a flu vaccination required?

Yes, employees who are required to get a flu vaccination must provide proof by December 1, 2016.

3. How do I submit proof of flu vaccination?

Employees receiving the flu vaccination through a state sponsored flu vaccination clinic will receive a copy of their vaccination record to submit to their supervisor as proof.

Employees who **do not** go to the state sponsored flu vaccination clinics need to return proof of vaccination to their supervisor by December 1, 2016.

Proof of flu vaccination may include a note or receipt from your medical provider, Explanation of Benefits from your health insurance company, or a receipt from a pharmacy. Proof must be clearly labeled as a flu vaccination and include the vaccination date.

4. Where can I receive my flu vaccination?

Employees covered by the South Dakota State Employee Health Plan are encouraged to attend free state sponsored flu vaccination clinics.

5. When will the state sponsored flu vaccination clinics be available?

The state sponsored flu vaccination schedule is available at http://benefits.sd.gov/flu_vaccination.aspx.

6. Will the state pay for my flu vaccination?

Employees covered by the South Dakota State Employee Health Plan can get a free flu vaccination at state sponsored clinics. Employees who Opt-Out of the State Employee Health Plan will be responsible for the cost of their flu vaccination.

7. Will I be allowed to get my flu vaccination at a state sponsored flu vaccination clinic if I have an egg allergy?

No, employees with egg allergies need to get a flu vaccination from a medical provider. The state health plan will only pay for the cost of the vaccine and the administration fee when you receive flu vaccine somewhere other than a state sponsored clinic.

8. Can I get a flu shot from another source other than a state sponsored flu vaccination clinic?

Yes, but it is your responsibility to find out if the flu vaccination is covered by the South Dakota State Employee Health Plan and provide proof of vaccination.

9. What if I have an exemption or refuse the flu vaccination?

Employees who have an exemption or refuse to get the flu vaccination will be required to wear a mask beginning December 1, 2016 through the remainder of the flu season.

10. Who will pay for the masks?

Agencies will provide masks for employees who refuse the flu vaccination.

11. Will I be required to wear a mask at all times while at work?

Agencies will determine when employees must wear the mask. The standard guideline is within 6 feet of another person.

12. Are there qualified exemptions for flu vaccination?

Yes, employees will be granted exemptions based on certain medical contraindications or adherence to a religious doctrine whose teachings are opposed to immunization. Employees granted exemptions are required to wear a mask beginning December 1, 2016 through the remainder of the flu season.

13. What is the deadline for requesting qualified exemptions for flu vaccination?

Those requesting an exception to the flu vaccination requirement must submit the request by Wednesday, November 4, 2016 to his/her direct supervisor on forms provided by the Bureau of Human Resources (BHR). The form is available at http://benefits.sd.gov/flu_vaccination.aspx.

Supervisors will send the completed exemption/refusal form to BHR for retention in the employee's personnel file.

14. What if I have an exemption or refuse the flu vaccination and refuse to mask?

Employees who do not to get a flu vaccination and refuse to wear a mask will be placed on furlough and/or subject to further disciplinary action.

15. Will employees hired during flu season be required to get a flu vaccination?

Newly hired employees covered by the executive order will be required to get a flu vaccination, provide proof of a previous flu vaccination for the 2016-17 flu season, or wear a mask.

16. Will contract staff, vendors, students, supervising faculty, or volunteers providing services be required to get a flu vaccination?

Contract staff, vendors, students, supervising faculty, or volunteers providing services who frequently visit the facilities covered in the executive order during flu season are required to get a flu vaccination or wear a mask. Agencies will determine who should receive the proof of vaccination and the location of the masks.

17. Will the state pay for outside personnel such as vendors and contractors flu shots?

No. The cost of the flu vaccination is the responsibility of the outside personnel.

18. Will visitors be required to wear a mask?

Visitors are not covered by the executive order. However an agency may institute measures to limit exposure to, or spread of, the flu within a facility if necessary.