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!!Scroll down for info on NJ Vaccine Clinic!!

COVID-19 Variants - What You Need to Know

Vaccination continues to be the best way to fight COVID-19. As we see variants such as Omicron having an impact around the world and Delta continuing to spread, we need to continue to be vigilant in our fight against this virus. If vaccinated, get your Booster as soon as eligible, continue to wear appropriate face coverings, wash hands and limit gatherings. Read the following article for what you need to know about Omicron.



Covid's omicron variant poses a 'very high' risk — here's what you need to know right now

Covid's omicron variant could be the most dangerous since delta. Here's how it might affect vaccine-induced protection, future restrictions and your ability to stay safe.



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Don't Forget - Mask Up!

OPWDD issued emergency regulations (14 NYCRR §633.26) requiring all agencies providing services or operating facilities that are certified or operated by OPWDD to require all staff, volunteers, contractors, vendors, visitors and individuals receiving services to wear appropriate face coverings consistent with any directives issued by OPWDD and consistent with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), to slow the spread of COVID-19 and to protect the individuals served by OPWDD and OPWDD providers and the staff that support them. CDC guidelines, in accordance with OSHA standards, has clarified that cloth masks are not considered Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). **Surgical masks, KN95s and N95 are "typically cleared by the US Food and Drug Administration" and are the appropriate "masks/face coverings" to be used as PPE.**

We have appropriate masks available, please reach out to your direct supervisor to coordinate getting these masks.

For NY Community Staff, you can visit our locations to pick up masks on the following days:

- Bronx office Wednesdays 9am - 3pm**
- Floral Park office Thursdays 10am - 3pm**
- Staten Island office Wednesdays 10am - 2pm*****
- Manhattan office Fridays 10am - 2pm**

*****New Staten Island Office Location - 800 Annadale Rd Staten Island NY 10312**



Mask Wearing 101: How to Properly Use & Re-use a Mask

In order for a mask to offer protection — rather than becoming a vehicle for COVID-19 germ-spreading — it must be handled, worn and stored properly. This ste...



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A Story of Overcoming Vaccine Hesitancy

I DID IT! After months and months of research and going back and forth with the idea of getting the COVID vaccine I finally decided it was my time. I am in no way against vaccines. In fact, I recently had my first child, and she is in the process of receiving all her necessary vaccines in order to walk this earth as safely as possible. I've been living this pandemic in total fear. Fear of getting COVID and fear of what the vaccine can do to me. I was unsure of both outcomes. What would be worse? What would be better? This was a constant battle that I had with myself every single day once I was finally eligible to receive the vaccine. I feel like many people are just unsure of what to do, how to perceive the idea of trusting science to protect us. The anxiety that came with the unknown was consuming me. I finally took matters into my own hands and started doing my research. I can't even count how many hours of research I did in order to make myself comfortable with the idea of getting the vaccine but as soon as I felt comfortable social media has changed my mind yet again. It was time to put on my blinders and ignore what everyone else had to say. I was confident that my sources were reliable and that the extra layer of protection was the best choice for me. - Community Services Team Member



New York Vaccination Incentive Payment

DEADLINE EXTENDED TO JANUARY 14, 2022! It is not too late to get your vaccination if you have not done so already.

CFS has been informed that New York State has received a new grant which includes a COVID 19 vaccination incentive payment, a longevity retention bonus and other types of bonuses.

All NY DSP employees who has been fully vaccinated with the COVID 19 vaccine by January 14, 2022 will be eligible to receive an incentive payment as described below. For those that may begin their vaccination regimen prior to November 30th you will be eligible to receive this bonus when fully vaccinated. Incentive payments will be made only if you provide proof of vaccination. You may send your COVID 19 vaccination card to HRvacstats@cfsny.org, our confidential HR email address.

Payments will be distributed as follows:
 A payment of \$500 per employee who is employed on a full-time basis
 A payment of \$250 per employee who is employed at least, but not less than 20 hours/week, and
 A payment of \$125 for part-time employees who are employed less than 20 hours/week.

Please be advised the sooner that we are informed that you have received your vaccination, the sooner we can issue the incentive payment .

Regarding the incentive payments on the longevity, retention and other types of bonuses, we are currently awaiting on guidance. We will inform you as soon as we receive more information. Once again, we want to say that we appreciate and thank you for your hard work and commitment. Any questions, please let me know.

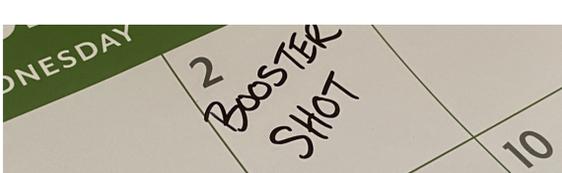
Annise Valdez-Godek, SHRM-CP
 Human Resources Director

COVID-19 Boosters - Have You Had Your Booster?

Getting vaccinated is the first step. However, in order to continue to fight the virus, we need to get the Booster as often as is clinically recommended.

COVID-19 vaccines and boosters are offered free for people who are living in the U.S.—even those without health insurance! Take advantage and get your booster shot if eligible.

Please complete the anonymous survey below.



Click this link to complete a short survey about the booster.

forms.office.com

NJ Vaccine Clinic - Thursday 12/9 Hackensack Office - COVID Booster and first dose as well as Flu vaccine available. If interested RSVP to dmessina@cfsny.org

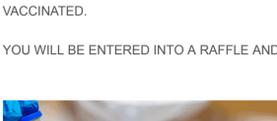
In both NY we are still planning to offer COVID-19 Booster Clinics. If you are interested in having a Booster shot and would like to participate in our Booster Clinic, please let us know. In NY, if interested, email Shayanne Gadson - sgadson@cfsny.org.

However, Booster shots are widely available to those who are eligible including our Direct Support Professional workforce. Click links below to schedule a Booster shot in your community. In NYC if you text your zip code to 438829, you can see vaccine locations in your neighborhood and it even asks you if you want a ride!

We want to make sure we are properly counting the numbers of staff who are vaccinated. So if you have been vaccinated make sure to send a copy of your vaccine card to hvacstats@cfsny.org.

As we receive information on additional mandates that will impact our workforce, we will share that information with you. However, in the meantime, join the millions of people and GET VACCINATED.

YOU WILL BE ENTERED INTO A RAFFLE AND A CHANCE TO WIN A \$100 GIFT CARD



NY Booster Doses Appointment Finder

Maximize your protection against COVID-19. Free booster shots are widely available statewide for eligible New Yorkers.

covid19vaccine.health...

NEW JERSEY COVID-19 Information Hu

NJ Vaccine Appointment Finder (Including Boosters)
 Find and schedule a vaccination appointment near you. All individuals aged 12 and older who live, work, or study in New Jersey are eligible for COVID-19 vaccines.

We Want to Hear From You!



WINNER OF THE \$100 GIFT CARD

Kathryn Umervosky



Special thanks to Arnaldo Giraldo for translating the newsletter into Spanish!

To reach out to our newsletter committee with any questions please contact Joanne Cropper jcropper2@cfsny.org, Donna Messina dmessina@cfsny.org or Linda Schellenberg lschellenberg@cfsny.org