

# UW-Madison Employment-Related Vaccination Policy

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<b>Functional Owner</b>	UHS Executive Director Sarah Van Orman, MD, MMM
<b>Executive Sponsor</b>	Vice Chancellor for Finance and Administration
<b>Policy Contact</b>	UHS Director of Environmental & Occupational Health Jim Morrison, MS, CIH, jmmorrison@uhs.wisc.edu

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## Policy Summary

This policy defines conditions and procedures to be followed when vaccinations are required as a condition of employment.

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## Who This Policy Applies To

This policy applies to UW Madison work units that require or recommend vaccinations related to employment activities.

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## Rationale

The health and well-being of employees and students at the UW is paramount. On occasion, members of the campus community may encounter infectious hazards related to their employment or academic work. The university, as all employers, has a duty to provide a workplace that is free from recognized hazards that could lead to serious injury or death. Just as use of personal protective equipment can mitigate recognized hazards, vaccinations can also offer protective benefits. This policy outlines conditions where vaccinations are mandatory and those where they are recommended. In general, participation in healthcare activities such as vaccinations or medical evaluations is voluntary. However, there are some circumstances where the risks of not participating in a required health activity can result in unreasonable risk to the individual, institution and/or community. Individual units may choose to adopt more stringent policies as described here. However, care should be taken to assure that requirements are well justified and applied equally to all employees.

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## Policy Detail

### Mandatory Vaccinations-

Vaccinations are required where all of the following conditions are met:

1. An infectious agent is present in the workplace that is likely to:
  - a. cause death or serious physical harm,
  - b. pose a threat of community disease transmission,
  - c. jeopardize patient safety, or
  - d. jeopardize research animal colonies.
2. Agent is worked with in a manner that poses substantial threat of exposure
3. An approved vaccine is available, or for emerging pathogens, a vaccine is available that has been shown to be effective and has gone through investigational new vaccine testing for regulatory purposes.

When a determination is made that vaccination is mandatory, the requirement to be vaccinated shall be described in the employee's position description. Vaccination requirements must be applied equally of all affected employees.

Circumstances may arise where the vaccination may be contraindicated due to health status of the employee. When a mandatory vaccination is declined, the employee shall be referred to the respective Office of Human Resources for a determination on whether alternative employment arrangements can be arranged.

Examples of biologic agents and conditions for which mandatory vaccination would be indicated might include work practices that create potential of contact through needlestick, splash or aerosolization with materials known to be inoculated or infected with agents such as rabies, pox viruses or infective agents for diseases such as Yellow Fever.

### **Strongly Recommended Vaccinations-**

Vaccinations are recommended where any of the following conditions are met:

1. An infectious agent is present or likely to be present that poses a risk of serious or irreversible illness in the general population
2. An approved effective vaccine is available, or for emerging pathogens, has gone through investigational new vaccine testing for regulatory purposes.
3. Employee infection may not represent an individual health concern, but may require aggressive isolation procedures of employee and family members if employee works with other high risk infectious agents with similar symptom patterns.
4. Employee work activity involves exposure to bloodborne pathogens.

Example agents/conditions for recommended vaccinations:

- Healthcare providers being vaccinated against influenza, measles, mumps, rubella to protect patients
- Rabies vaccination for work with wild caught animals or unvaccinated carnivores
- Influenza vaccination for work with H5N1 or other agents that may cause influenza-like illness, so as to minimize confusion and anxiety related to suspicion of lab-acquired infection related to flu-like symptoms.
- Hepatitis B vaccination for work with human blood or other related infectious materials

If an employee declines an offer of vaccination, a declination form should be signed and returned to the Environmental & Occupational Health Unit of University Health Services for inclusion in the employee health record. If either medical limitations or declination of health services could result in a significant risk of substantial harm to the individual or others, UHS shall make a referral to the respective Divisional Disability Representative for review of possible workplace accommodations to reduce the associated risk.

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### **Consequences for Non-Compliance**

Consequences of non-compliance with this policy may include serious illness or death related to vaccine preventable illness and/or litigation related to unfair labor practices.

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### **Supporting Tools**

UW Madison Occupational Health Surveillance Policy <insert web link>

UW Madison Occupational Health Surveillance Procedures <insert web link>

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## **Responsibilities**

UHS Environmental & Occupational Health Unit- The UHS EOH Unit is responsible for developing the content and ongoing review of this policy.

UHS Occupational Medicine Program- The UHS Occupational Medicine Program is responsible for the medical content of this policy.

Supervisors- Supervisors are responsible for reviewing this policy and working with the UHS EOH Unit in formulating work-related requirements for vaccinations.

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## **Link to Current and Related Policies**

<http://www.uhs.wisc.edu/campus-health/policies/>

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## **Policy History**

Initial draft date: <date>

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