



LeadingAge Massachusetts Statement on Requiring COVID-19 Vaccination for Staff in Healthcare/Senior Care/ Senior Living

August 4, 2021

The availability of highly effective and safe COVID-19 vaccines has led to dramatic reductions in COVID-19 infections and death among older adults who are most vulnerable to the virus. Vaccination against COVID-19 is the single most important thing we can do to protect older adults from undue suffering resulting from COVID-19 infection. LeadingAge MA and our members have worked diligently to educate, encourage, and assist staff at member organizations to become vaccinated. On average, more than 80% of employees at LeadingAge MA member organizations are vaccinated, a rate that exceeds both state and national averages. Still, as new variants of COVID emerge and proliferate, even fully vaccinated older adults may be at risk, including from unvaccinated staff who care for them. Those who provide health care and serve older adults have an ethical obligation to ensure they are protecting those they serve. With safe and effective vaccines widely available, there is no excuse to return to a situation in which vulnerable older adults become sick and die from COVID.

LeadingAge MA applauds the [Commonwealth's announcement](#) to mandate that all staff in nursing homes be vaccinated against COVID-19. But in order to protect the most vulnerable older adults from breakthrough cases and new COVID variants, LeadingAge MA [joins with our national partner, LeadingAge](#) in supporting vaccine requirements for current and new staff in all long-term care, senior living and other healthcare settings. As the most effective tool to protect from the virus, we advocate that COVID-19 vaccination be a condition of employment for all workers in healthcare, senior care, and senior living communities, including employees, contract staff and others, with appropriate exemptions for those with medical contraindications or as specified by federal or state law.

LeadingAge MA will continue our ongoing efforts to provide members with best practices and resources to increase vaccination rates among their employees including support for members to implement vaccine requirements. Not only is required vaccination an ethical imperative, organizations that adopt these requirements may be seen as providers and employers of choice within their communities.