



The Director

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
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Memorandum for Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

From: Kiran A. Ahuja
Director

Subject: Leave policies related to COVID-19 Vaccination Boosters

Vaccines are the best tool we have in our toolbox to combat COVID-19. They are safe, effective, and free. The Safer Federal Workforce Task Force continues to provide guidance to promote vaccinations to ensure the safety of the Federal workforce and those we serve. On November 19, 2021, the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#) amended the emergency use authorizations for both the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccines authorizing use of a single booster dose for all individuals 18 years of age and older at least 6 months after completion of primary vaccination with any FDA-authorized or approved COVID-19 vaccine. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) also issued a [media statement](#) and [updated guidance](#) on this matter.

To support the Administration's vaccination efforts, the Office of Personnel Management would like to remind agency human resources offices and the Federal workforce of the leave policies associated with getting the booster shot that can be found at the [Safer Federal Workforce website](#).

Q: Must an agency grant administrative leave to cover the period of time it takes an employee to receive a COVID-19 vaccine booster shot or for an immunocompromised employee to receive an additional dose?

Yes. To promote the safety of the Federal workforce and the public they serve, agencies must grant leave-eligible employees up to four hours of administrative leave to receive any authorized COVID-19 vaccine booster shot, if they are eligible to receive such a booster shot. Similarly, agencies must grant leave-eligible employees up to four hours of administrative leave to receive any authorized additional dose of COVID-19 vaccine. The administrative leave will cover the time it takes to travel to the vaccination site, receive the vaccination dose, and return to work. Because there is currently no requirement for Federal employees to receive a vaccine booster shot or additional dose, granting duty time is not allowable in these instances.

If an employee needs to spend less time getting the vaccine booster shot or additional dose, only the needed amount of administrative leave should be granted. Employees should obtain advance approval from their supervisor before using administrative leave for purposes of obtaining a COVID-19 vaccine booster shot or additional dose. Employees may not be credited with administrative leave or overtime work for time spent getting a booster vaccine shot or additional dose outside their tour of duty.

In the case of booster shots, this policy may be applied retroactively to the time when authorized booster shots became available (i.e., no earlier than September 22, 2021, when the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) amended the emergency use authorization for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine to allow for the use of a single booster dose). In the case of additional doses, this policy may be applied retroactively to the time when authorized additional doses became available (i.e., no earlier than August 12, 2021, when the FDA amended the emergency use authorization for the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines to allow for the use of an additional dose in certain immunocompromised individuals).

For more information on booster shots, go to the [CDC web page on COVID-19 vaccine booster shots](#).

For more information on additional doses, go the [CDC web page on immunocompromised patients & COVID-19 vaccine](#).

Q: Must an agency grant administrative leave to cover the period of time it takes an employee to accompany a family member who is receiving a COVID-19 vaccination?

A: Yes, an agency must grant administrative leave to federal employees who accompany any family member who is receiving a COVID-19 vaccination.

Based on President Biden’s direction that the Federal Government should work aggressively to maximize the number of people receiving the COVID-19 vaccination, the Administration has determined that, going forward, agencies must grant administrative leave to federal employees who accompany their family members who are receiving any dose of a COVID-19 vaccination. For this purpose, a “family member” is an individual who meets the definition of that term in OPM’s leave regulations (see 5 CFR 630.201).

Under this policy, agencies must grant leave-eligible employees up to four hours of administrative leave per dose—for example, up to a total of twelve hours of leave for a family member receiving three doses—for each family member the employee accompanies. (If an employee needs to spend less time accompanying a family member who is receiving the COVID-19 vaccine, only the needed amount of administrative leave should be granted.) Employees should obtain advance approval from their supervisor before being permitted to use administrative leave for COVID-19 vaccination purposes. Employees may not be credited with administrative leave or overtime work for time spent outside their tour of duty helping a family member get vaccinated. This policy applies to covered vaccinations received after posting of this FAQ on July 29, 2021.

Agencies should take prompt steps to ensure all Federal employees are aware of the availability of this leave and how to access it.

Additional Information

Agency headquarters-level human resources offices may contact OPM at pay-leave-policy@opm.gov. Component-level human resources offices must contact their agency headquarters for assistance. Because the granting of administrative leave is administered by employing agencies, employees must contact their agency human resources office for further information regarding this matter.

cc: Chief Human Capital Officers, Deputy CHCOs, Human Resources Directors, and Work-Life Coordinators