



Reserve Action Bulletin



Annual Influenza (Flu) Immunization Program

This year, more than ever, SELRES are reminded that the flu vaccination is mandatory. Due to delayed flu vaccine shipments, availability of the vaccine has become a concern. As discussed in the below ALCOAST, SELRES may receive their vaccination from their primary care provider, a pharmacy that takes TRICARE, Reserve Health Readiness Program (RHRP), through a RHRP contracted clinic or RHRP Walgreen's walk-in option with voucher.

Members must provide proof of vaccination to allow their cognizant clinic to record medical-readiness by 15 January, 2021.

In addition to vaccination, it's imperative that members employ practices to reduce the risk of flu and COVID-19 transmission e.g., social distancing, mask wearing and improved hand hygiene.

SELRES experiencing flu or COVID-19 like symptoms (fever, chills, nausea/vomiting, shortness of breath/trouble breathing, etc.), must err on the side of caution and work with their Command to reschedule duty rather than reporting if feeling ill. The health and safety of individuals and readiness of Commands and units rests in the balance of good judgement and taking necessary precautions to limit exposure and transmission of these deadly viruses.

Questions regarding the annual flu immunization program should be directed to the Office of Health, Safety, and Work-Life. Servicing clinics can be found here: https://www.reserve.uscg.mil/Portals/2/Documents/PDF/HSWL_HRC_list_SELRES%232.pdf?ver=2018-08-17-135417-933.

Thanks for your attention to this important information.

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TO ALCOAST

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ALCOAST 356/20

COMDTNOTE 6230

SUBJ: 2020-2021 ANNUAL INFLUENZA (FLU) IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM

A. Immunizations and Chemoprophylaxis for the Prevention of Infectious Diseases, COMDTINST M6230.4 (series)

B. Coast Guard Medical Manual, COMDTINST M6000.1 (series)

C. Coast Guard Occupational Medicine Manual, COMDTINST M6260.32 (series)

D. Defense Health Agency Procedural Instruction 6025.34, Influenza Vaccination Program

E. Decision Memo 22Sep2020, Address Annual Influenza Vaccine Delayed Shipment Concerns

1. Influenza ('flu') is a highly contagious disease, which has the potential to significantly degrade operational readiness. The most effective strategy to prevent the flu and/or reduce its impact, is annual vaccination. In addition to vaccination, many activities we are using to prevent the spread of COVID-19, e.g. social distancing, mask wearing, and improved hand hygiene will also reduce transmission of influenza.

2. Flu vaccination is mandatory for all Coast Guard Active Duty (AD) and Selected Reserve (SELRES) personnel to ensure force medical readiness and avoid disruption of Coast Guard missions. IAW REFs (A) through (D), the seasonal flu vaccine is also mandatory for Child Development Services (CDC) personnel (including certified Family Child Care Providers); civilian, contract, and auxiliary healthcare personnel who provide direct patient care; and recreation personnel in the youth programs at Borinquen, Cape Cod, Kodiak, and Petaluma. Flu vaccination must be recorded no later than 15 January 2021.

3. Defense Logistics Agency informed the Services that some vaccine may be delayed this season until the middle of November. If this delay actualizes then upwards of 50% of Coast Guard's allocation may be impacted. IAW REF (E), Coast Guard MTF's shall prioritize medical staff, pregnant members, accession point staff, trainees, personnel critical to Coast Guard operations and mission support working within congregate settings, with initial allocation of vaccine. Recommend active duty and dependents with underlying co-morbidities, as defined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/highrisk/index.htm>, receive the vaccine at earliest convenience.

4. Flu vaccinations are available at Coast Guard clinics for AD personnel and for Auxiliary healthcare personnel assigned to Coast Guard clinics. Contract personnel will obtain the flu vaccine according to the terms of their contract.

5. Remotely located AD and SELRES personnel have several options for obtaining flu vaccinations this season:

a. Personnel who have TRICARE may receive their vaccination from their Primary Care Provider or from a pharmacy, which takes TRICARE.



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b. Remotely located AD and SELRES personnel may receive their flu vaccination via the Reserve Health Readiness Program (RHRP) through an RHRP contracted clinic or the RHRP Walgreens Walk-in option. These personnel should contact their servicing Coast Guard clinic to place an order. A list of Coast Guard clinics supporting all units in the Coast Guard can be found at:

https://www.reserve.uscg.mil/Portals/2/Documents/PDF/HSWL_HRC_list_SELRES%232.pdf?ver=2018-08-17-135417-933.

6. All immunizations for civilian employees, including the seasonal influenza immunization shall be obtained through a private Health Care Provider (HCP). Coast Guard civilian employees enrolled in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) can be immunized through their health plan at no out-of-pocket cost. Many FEHBP health plans make the flu vaccine available in pharmacies and other convenient community locations. Coast Guard civilian employees who are not insured through the FEHBP and who are required to be immunized against the flu must complete the Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business, Form OF1164, in order to obtain reimbursement from COMDT (CG-832). Ms. Regina Cash and Mr. Felix Edozie are the COMDT (CG-832) POCs regarding the reimbursement process. Upon obtaining immunization through a private HCP, civilian employees who are required to have the flu vaccine must provide the following information to the cognizant clinic administrator NLT 15 January 2021: the date the vaccine was administered, the vaccine name or code, the manufacturer and lot number, the dose administered, route and anatomic site of vaccination, the date the Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) was provided, and the VIS version date.

7. For Non-Appropriated Funds (NAF) personnel, Coast Guard Community Services Command is offering Walgreens flu shot vouchers for CDC employees starting on 1 September 2020. CDC supervisors can provide information about this option. Otherwise, NAF employees may obtain the flu vaccination through their NAF health insurance or other health insurance coverage available. Those employees who are not part of the NAF health benefits plan and are mandated to obtain the flu vaccine IAW Paragraph 2 above may complete the Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business, Form OF1164 (as described in paragraph 5), and submit the form and the immunization receipt to their supervisors for approval and submission to Ms. Virginia Cameron, Human Resources Director in the Community Services Command, for payment. NAF employees who are required to have the flu vaccine must provide appropriate documentation, as described in Paragraph 5, to their supervisor NLT 15 January 2021.

8. Commanding officers are responsible for ensuring medical readiness, including compliance with the annual flu vaccine requirement. Military personnel must receive the flu vaccine as supplies become available. A vaccination rate of 90% or greater for military personnel is targeted NLT 15 January 2021. Exemptions to the flu vaccine may be considered IAW REFs (A) and (C).

9. POC: LCDR Iman Martin, Chief, Preventive Medicine and Population Health, COMDT (CG-1121), 202-475-5208, or Iman.K.Martin@uscg.mil.

10. RADM Dana L. Thomas, Director, Health, Safety, and Work-Life, sends.

11. Internet release is authorized.