

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

BY HIS EXCELLENCY

NED LAMONT

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 14C

**PROTECTION OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC –
VACCINE BOOSTER REQUIREMENT FOR STATE HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES**

WHEREAS, on March 10, 2020, I declared public health and civil preparedness emergencies throughout the State of Connecticut in response to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) outbreak caused by the SARS-Cov-2 virus in the United States and Connecticut; and

WHEREAS, on several occasions since March 10, 2020, acting within my authority pursuant to Sections 19a-131 and 28-9 of the Connecticut General Statutes as well as Special Acts 21-2, 21-4, and 21-5 of the General Assembly, and in response to the continued need to respond adequately to the COVID-19 pandemic, I renewed the declarations of public health and civil preparedness emergencies and also issued new declarations of public health and civil preparedness emergencies; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to such declarations, I have issued executive orders to protect public health, limit transmission of COVID-19, and mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that spreads easily from person to person and may result in serious illness or death; and

WHEREAS, the World Health Organization has declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, COVID-19 presents increased risk of severe illness, complications, and death to older adults and particularly those with chronic conditions and an increase in infections of state hospital employees will lead to an increase in resident infections; and

WHEREAS, the omicron variant of COVID-19 is highly contagious and spreads more easily and quickly than other COVID-19 variants; and

WHEREAS, the highly transmissible omicron variant has caused COVID-19 infections to rapidly increase within the United States and Connecticut; and

WHEREAS, vaccination is the most effective means of preventing infection, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19 and of limiting transmission and outbreaks of the disease, and is therefore a critical tool to respond to and slow the ongoing pandemic; and

WHEREAS, while currently available vaccines continue to protect against severe illness, hospitalizations, and deaths resulting from infection with the omicron variant, public health experts are seeing waning protection over time especially in people 65 years and older, and in response have recommended that vaccinated individuals receive a booster dose; and

WHEREAS, while Connecticut has made significant progress in administering vaccines, with more than 88% of all Connecticut residents and 95% of people 12 and older having received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose, only about 41% have received a booster dose; and

WHEREAS, according to the CDC, data from clinical trials shows that a booster shot increases the immune response in trial participants who finished a Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna primary series 6 months earlier or who received a J&J/Janssen single-dose vaccine 2 months earlier and with an increased immune response, people should have improved protection against getting infected with COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, as of this week, of the 1,676 patients currently hospitalized with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19, 1,128 (67.3%) are not fully vaccinated; and

WHEREAS, infection rates and hospitalizations are increasing amongst individuals who are fully vaccinated, but have not received a booster vaccine as recommended by the CDC and FDA; and

WHEREAS, state health officials recommend that workers in settings like state hospitals get their booster shots amid a spike in COVID-19 cases amongst the general population; and

WHEREAS, vaccines are widely available in Connecticut; and

WHEREAS, it is the duty of every employer to protect the health and safety of employees by establishing and maintaining a healthy and safe work environment and by requiring all employees to comply with health and safety measures;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, NED LAMONT, Governor of the State of Connecticut, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Connecticut, do hereby **ORDER AND DIRECT**:

1. **Amendment of Executive Order No. 13G.** Executive Order No. 13G is amended as follows:

- a. **Additional Definitions:**

1. “COVID-19 vaccine booster” means an FDA approved or authorized dose of a COVID-19 vaccine for individuals who are fully vaccinated.
2. “Vaccination status” means whether the individual is fully vaccinated and has received a COVID-19 vaccine booster after the time interval authorized or approved by the FDA.

- b. **Vaccination Booster Requirement for State Hospital Employees.** By February 11, 2022, a state hospital employee shall: (1) be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and, if eligible under FDA or CDC guidance, have received a COVID-19 booster or (2) be exempt from this requirement because a physician, physician's assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse determined that the administration of COVID-19 vaccine is likely to be detrimental to the health of the state hospital employee, or the individual objects to vaccination on the basis of a sincerely held religious or spiritual belief, and the state hospital employee is able to perform her or his essential job functions with a reasonable accommodation that is not an undue burden on the covered state agency, provided that any state hospital employee claiming such exemption shall apply for an exemption on the basis of medical conditions or sincerely held religious or spiritual beliefs. Each request for an exemption will be considered on an individualized, case-by-case basis. Any person who has applied for an exemption must provide appropriate supporting documentation upon request.
- c. **Vaccination Requirements for Prospective State Hospital Employees.** By February 11, 2022, a covered state agency shall, prior to extending an offer of employment, or entering into a contract for the in-person services of a state hospital employee require that such employee (1) is fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and, if eligible under FDA or CDC guidance, has received a COVID-19 vaccine booster, (2) has received the first dose and has either received a second dose or has an appointment for the second dose in a two-dose series vaccination, such as Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or has received a single dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine, or (3) is exempt from this requirement because a physician, physician's assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse determined that the administration of COVID-19 vaccine is likely to be detrimental to the state hospital employee's health, or the individual objects to vaccination on the basis of a sincerely held religious or spiritual belief, and state hospital employee is able to perform her or his essential job functions with a reasonable accommodation that is not an undue burden on the covered state agency, provided that any state hospital employee claiming such exemption shall apply for an exemption on the basis of medical conditions or sincerely held religious or spiritual beliefs. Each request for an exemption shall be considered on an individualized, case-by-case basis. Any person who has applied for an exemption shall provide appropriate supporting documentation upon request.
- d. **Failure to Receive Second Dose.** A covered state agency shall not employ or maintain a contract or other arrangements with a state hospital employee who (1) has received the first dose of a two-dose

series vaccination but fails to receive the second dose on the appropriate date or at the scheduled appointment without good cause or (ii) is fully vaccinated but fails to receive a COVID-19 vaccine booster within five (5) days from when the individual is eligible under FDA or CDC guidance.

This order shall take effect immediately and remain in effect through February 15, 2022.

Dated at Hartford, Connecticut, this 6th day of January, 2022.



Ned Lamont
Governor

By His Excellency's Command



Denise W. Merrill
Secretary of the State

