



September 15, 2020

DIRECTIVE:	JOB CORPS INFORMATION NOTICE NO. 20-01
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TO: ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF  
ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL OFFICE STAFF  
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS  
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS  
ALL FOREST SERVICE CENTER OPERATORS  
ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS  
ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS, AND CTS CONTRACTORS

FROM: DEBRA A. CARR  
Acting National Director  
Office of Job Corps

**DEBRA  
CARR**

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DEBRA CARR  
Date: 2020.09.15  
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SUBJECT: Influenza Update for the 2020-2021 Season

1. Purpose. To inform Job Corps centers of influenza (flu) prevention, testing, and treatment, based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) most recent recommendations.
2. Background. Every flu season has the potential to cause significant illness, increased health care utilization, hospitalization, and death. Flu is caused by influenza viruses, and is spread mainly by coughing, sneezing, and close contact. Anyone can get flu. Flu strikes suddenly and can last several days. Symptoms vary, but can include fever, chills, sore throat, muscle aches, fatigue, cough, headache and runny or stuffy nose.

The CDC encourages vaccination against seasonal flu by the end of October. Flu vaccines are designed to protect against the influenza viruses that experts predict will be the most common during the upcoming season. Three kinds of influenza viruses commonly circulate among people today: influenza A (H1N1) viruses, influenza A (H3N2) viruses, and influenza B viruses. Each year, these viruses are used to produce a seasonal flu vaccine.

Job Corps faces new challenges in immunizing students against flu this year given the coronavirus pandemic. Students were sent home in mid-March and engaged in distance learning starting in mid-May. A small number of students currently reside on centers, with a gradual return of all students planned for this fall and winter. Challenges include predicting and ordering an appropriate number of vaccine doses needed on center and encouraging new and returning students to receive a flu vaccine at home early this fall.

3. Action.

a. Vaccination

A flu vaccine is needed every year. All Job Corps students and staff are encouraged to receive a flu vaccine. For the 2020-2021 flu season, the [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices \(ACIP\)](#) recommends annual flu vaccination for everyone 6 months and older with any licensed, influenza vaccine that is appropriate for the recipient's age and health status, including inactivated influenza vaccine (IIV), recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV), or live attenuated nasal spray influenza vaccine (LAIV4) with no preference expressed for any one vaccine over another. There are multiple flu vaccine options for the 2020-2021 season. Health staff are encouraged to learn more about this year's vaccines at: [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/rr/rr6908a1.htm?s\\_cid=rr6908a1\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/69/rr/rr6908a1.htm?s_cid=rr6908a1_w). Ideally, vaccination should be completed by the end of October, but late administration of flu vaccine (until March) still affords protection as cases of seasonal influenza may peak in late winter.

It is especially important that people with certain health conditions and health care workers receive a flu vaccine. More information is available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/highrisk/index.htm>.

According to the CDC, people with egg allergies can receive any licensed, recommended age-appropriate flu vaccine that is otherwise suitable. People who have a history of severe egg allergy (those who have had any symptom other than hives after exposure to egg) should be vaccinated in a medical setting, supervised by a health care provider who is able to recognize and manage severe allergic reactions.

Centers should first contact their state and/or local health departments to inquire if a flu vaccine is available for administration on or off center. Some pharmacies have provided a flu vaccine for Job Corps students at no cost to the center. If not available locally, flu vaccines can be purchased from the Health and Human Services Supply Service Center in Perry Point, MD, or from private vendors.

Centers may wish to offer flu vaccine administration to students in alternate locations, such as the cafeteria during lunch break to include nonresident students or the dormitories after hours to increase voluntary participation. Incentives and contests may enhance acceptance. Members of the Student Government Association should engage in promoting flu vaccination among their peers. Flu vaccines should remain available on center throughout the flu season for newly enrolled students and for students who may have initially declined to be immunized.

Students who remain at home participating in distance learning should be strongly encouraged to obtain a flu vaccine locally before the end of October, and forward

documentation to the Health & Wellness Center to be included in their student health record (SHR). Center health staff may access state immunization registries to confirm influenza immunization and to record any immunizations administered on center.

b. Education

Job Corps centers are encouraged to share with students and staff the following tips for controlling the spread of influenza on center:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze. Alcohol-based hand cleansers are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Encourage residential students to contact the Health and Wellness Center if they become ill. Sick nonresidential students and staff should be encouraged to stay home and limit contact with others.

Two measures added in response to the COVID-19 pandemic will also limit the spread of influenza:

- Maintain physical distancing of six feet away from other persons when practical.
- Universal use of face protection by students and staff on center. Refer to center-specific COVID-19 protocols for detailed instructions.

c. Planning and Response

Job Corps centers are encouraged to review their new COVID-19 protocols to prepare for potential influenza outbreaks on center. Center health staff members are also encouraged to contact their state and/or local health departments for the latest information on vaccine availability, and recommendations for testing, treatment and prophylaxis as the season progresses. Centers should continue to use the Significant Incident Reporting System to keep the National and Regional Offices of Job Corps informed about epidemic influenza on center. For reporting purposes, epidemic influenza will be defined by Job Corps as sequential cases affecting 10 percent or more of on-board strength.

Closing of Job Corps centers in response to influenza is not anticipated, although new intakes might be restricted if cases reach the epidemic threshold on center. Non-residential students should stay home at onset of flu symptoms including fever, chills, sore throat, cough, and muscle pain. Residential students may be transported home or isolated on center in their dorm rooms. Public transportation should not be used for students exhibiting symptoms of influenza. Patients can

spread influenza virus 1 day before symptoms appear and up to 5 days after onset of illness. Students with influenza should not return to class or to work until fever has resolved for 24 hours without treatment and 5 days have passed since onset of symptoms. For Job Corps students, medical leave for influenza will not require third party verification.

d. Testing and Treatment

Diagnostic testing can help distinguish influenza from COVID-19 since antiviral medications are available for influenza. Co-infection with influenza A or B viruses and SARS-CoV-2 can occur and should be considered, particularly in patients with severe respiratory disease.

Antiviral medications are prescription drugs that can be used to treat or prevent influenza. People at high risk of serious flu complications and people who are very sick with influenza should get antiviral drugs. Other people can be treated with antivirals at their health care professional's discretion. Treatment with antivirals works best when begun within 48 hours of getting sick but can still be beneficial when given later in the course of illness. Antiviral drugs are effective across all age and risk groups. This season, three FDA-approved influenza antiviral drugs are recommended for use in the United States. These drugs are oral oseltamivir (Tamiflu), inhaled zanamivir (Relenza) and oral baloxavir marboxil (Xofluza). The influenza antiviral drugs amantadine or rimantadine should not be used due to high levels of resistance (> 99%) with influenza A and no effect on influenza B.

Addressees are to ensure this Information Notice is distributed to all appropriate staff.

4. Resources. For the most current information on influenza, visit the following CDC websites:

- a. Influenza overview: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>
- b. Information for health professionals: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/index.htm>
- c. Free influenza resources to download: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/index.htm>
- d. Updated influenza Vaccine Information Statements (VIS) dated 8/15/2019: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/flu.html>

5. Expiration Date. Until superseded.

6. Inquiries. Inquiries should be directed to center Health and Wellness staff, Humanitas Regional Nurse Specialists (Shannon Bentley at (606) 424-3500 or [Bentley.Shannon@jobcorps.org](mailto:Bentley.Shannon@jobcorps.org); Melissa Cusey at (616) 540-0299 or [Cusey.Melissa@jobcorps.org](mailto:Cusey.Melissa@jobcorps.org)), or Cassandra Thomas in Job Corps' national office at (202) 693-3933 or [Thomas.Cassandra@dol.gov](mailto:Thomas.Cassandra@dol.gov).