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Starting August 23, SunCommon will require vaccination against COVID-19 for employees.

This wasn't decided lightly. We were able to avoid it for the first 16 months of the global pandemic. But the wave of dangerous infection brought by the Delta variant has forced this latest step -- to protect our beloved employees and their families, and our customers.

After over 600,000 American lives were lost to COVID, it seemed like we were turning a corner toward normalcy. Offices reopened, restaurants and music venues fired up again, vacation travel resumed. But the dramatically more contagious [Delta variant took hold](#) and returned us to the dark days of widespread infection, hospitalization and death. And with children under 12 unable to be protected with vaccines, [little kids are getting sick and dying](#). 72,000 children have contracted the disease in the U.S., one-fifth of all new cases. Summer camp in our home town of Waterbury, Vermont just shut down with [25 kids testing positive](#). The Hudson Valley is again being ["hit hard" by contagion](#).

The remedy to this awful plague is at hand: vaccination. It's effective, safe, available and free.

Attentive organizations across the spectrum are now requiring vaccination protection for their employees, including:

- [the entire United States military](#)
- [scores of federal and state governmental agencies](#)
- [over 600 colleges and universities](#)
- [numerous employers like Apple, Cisco, Disney, Google, United](#)

Here's how this will work here at SunCommon:

By August 23, show proof of vaccination from this dreadful disease.

Earlier this year, the SunCommon employee survey showed around 94% of us were already vaccinated or intended to do so. Staff will need to share documentation of your vaccination with your HR Manager. Cell phone photo, scan, or photocopy - whatever's easiest for you. HR maintains the privacy of these like any other confidential personnel document.

For those who've put off their vaccine, please take this time to get it. Vaccines are now widely available, at convenient places and times, and utterly free to you. You can even use company time to get your vaccine. And they've made it really easy to find your nearby spot in [New York](#) or [Vermont](#). If you need any help navigating this, chat with the HR team - they're here to help. For 2-shot vaccines, the documentation of the first dose will suffice by August 23, pending timely completion of the course.

Folks who have not shared documentation of their vaccination by **August 23** will forfeit their SunCommon employment.

This applies to all SunCommon employees operating out of the Rhinebeck and Waterbury facilities. Even folks who now work remotely need to be protected, as we want Teams to be able to gather for collaboration, safely. Workers residing outside of New York or Vermont are encouraged to get protected, but not required until we again gather in-person as an entire Company.

Employees with documented medical conditions that prevent such vaccination and those whose religious practices prevent vaccination may be exempted, in exchange for weekly COVID testing and furnishing the results to HR. If that's you, connect with HR.

Current protocols remain in effect until August 23 - where employees who have not shown proof of vaccination need to be masked and maintain 6' distance from others in SunCommon facilities or at worksites.

[Here's how we arrived at this:](#)

Create an ethical framework. We have prioritized the health and safety of all of those under our responsibility. Employees deserve a workplace that actively avoids preventable harms. Customers deserve to know they are protected from danger from SunCommon employees.

We considered how a vaccination mandate would affect our employees' right to autonomy - their right to make their own decisions without interference from others. Yet an employee's individual rights do not extend to actions that would harm others. We're in a pandemic, and collective action is necessary to safeguard our people from it.

Adhere to science. SunCommon, a market-solution to the climate crisis, is a science-based organization -- and we adhere to science.

The overwhelming consensus of the scientific community is that COVID vaccines are [highly effective](#) at reducing the risk of harm from a COVID-19 infection, more than they increase the risk of severe adverse reactions. Beyond their established effectiveness, these vaccines are [incredibly safe](#). More than 2.1 billion doses have been administered around the world under heavy scrutiny from researchers, governments and watchdog organizations. Serious adverse events—those that cause or extend hospitalization or result in persistent disability or death—[have been exceedingly rare](#).

In contrast, COVID-19 has killed [almost 4 million people](#). And [as many as one-third](#) of COVID-19 patients experience significant health problems after they've had the disease; [these include](#) cardiovascular, pulmonary, renal, dermatologic, neurologic, and autoimmune disorders. The available COVID-19 vaccines are orders of magnitude safer

than an acute or chronic infection or the quality-of-life impact from post-COVID-19 syndrome.

Members of a vaccinated workforce are [far less likely to risk infecting](#) their customers or each other, thus reducing social and economic harm across the community. A stark reminder of this danger is a nursing home in Kentucky, where a single unvaccinated employee [caused an outbreak](#) that sickened 20 employees and 26 residents, killing two. Both the employee and the organization own this loss of life and the irreparable harm to their community. We have a responsibility here.

Accommodate exemptions on medical conditions or religious practices. Our vaccination mandate includes thoughtful policies that accommodate employees with medical conditions or sincerely-held religious beliefs inconsistent with vaccination. Those granted exemptions must undergo COVID-19 testing every week and document negative results to HR, wear facial coverings and maintain distancing while at work.

Provide adequate time. Folks have some time to consider this unwelcome turn in the course of the pandemic, their personal role in our community, the facts around the vaccine and the process to get protected.

In conclusion

Societally, we have the ability to stamp this out. Closer to home, we at SunCommon need to safeguard our colleagues, their families and our customers. The clear pathway is vaccination against this again accelerating disease. It's safe, effective, easy and free.

Yours in caring for our people,

Duane and James
SunCommon Co-Founders

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