

**DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS**

Memorandum

Date: November 14, 2018
From: SFVAHCS Seasonal Influenza Working Group
Subj: Flu Prevention Update for Employees, Volunteers, Researchers and Trainees
To: SFVAHCS Employees, Volunteers, Researchers and Trainees

The flu season is upon us. As of December 1, 2018, we are approaching the time when there is increased spread of flu through our medical centers, clinics, and communities. We would like to remind you of the following ways to protect yourselves, your patients and your families as we approach the flu season.

1. Get the flu vaccine:

- Flu vaccine continues to be available at Occupational Health at SFVAMC, Bldg 203, Ground Floor, Room GB-17a, drop-in hours between 7 and 9:30 AM and between 12:30 and 2 PM; Medical Practice Drop-In Flu Clinic: Bldg 200, Medical Practice Waiting Area between 8:30 AM and noon daily and between 1 and 4 PM. Nurses are available to give flu vaccines at all CBOC.
- VHA Directive 1192 requires employees and volunteers to provide written documentation of receiving flu vaccine to Occupational Health by November 30, 2018. Please email documentation of receipt of flu vaccination (with image attached) to Occupational Health at VHASFCOccupationalHealthFax@va.gov or fax verification to secure fax 1-415-750-2156. Please follow up in occupational health to receive your flu “dot” sticker which you may voluntarily place on your name badge to indicate you have received the flu vaccine this flu season.

2. For those who decline the flu vaccine:

- Fill out the declination form and fax or deliver in person to Occupational Health by November 30, 2018. You can find the 2018 – 2019 Flu Consent and Declination Form in the Flu Packet on SFVAHCS Share Point at: <http://vaww.visn21.portal.va.gov/sanfrancisco/ic/WikiPages/Flu.aspx>
- If you have not received a flu shot by November 30, you must wear a face mask (loop mask or surgical mask) while in any VHA facility throughout the Influenza Season (from December 1 through March 31). This includes both clinical and non-clinical areas and when performing assigned duties outside VA medical facilities (such as driving a van or home visits). Additional information about when wearing a mask is required is available at VHA Directive 1192 link referenced below.
- Surgical loop masks are available at all inpatient nursing stations and outpatient clinics. Loop masks should be changed if soiled, damaged, and at least daily. Specific guidelines on use of loop masks are available at: <https://www.sfcddcp.org/communicable-disease/healthy-habits/how-to-put-on-and-remove-a-face-mask/>

3. How to take care of yourself at work during the flu season:

- Wash your hands/use hand gel often
- Cover your cough
- If you have fever (temperature > 100.4°F), respiratory symptoms, aches/pains, chills, stay home! Tamiflu® (medication against flu) can work for you so call your provider as soon as possible
- If you develop symptoms of flu while on duty during working hours, please put on a surgical loop mask and report to Occupational Health if you would like to see if you are eligible to receive Tamiflu®
- You may return to work once you have had no fever for at 24 hours AND at least 5 days after symptoms started AND are feeling better

Reference:

VHA Directive 1192: Seasonal Influenza Prevention Program for VHA Health Care Personnel on SFVAHCS Intranet at: <https://vaww.va.gov/vhapublications/publications.cfm?Pub=1> dated September 26, 2017, updated October 16, 2018.