

CDC Issues New Guidance for Vaccinated Individuals



Natalie K. Sanders

March 9, 2021

Subscribe to News and Insights

Via RSS

Via Email



On March 8, 2021, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued new guidance for people who have been vaccinated for COVID-19. (A person becomes “vaccinated” two weeks after receiving the second shot of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine or one shot of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.) The public guidance is based on a contemporaneously issued science brief describing preliminary evidence that the vaccines are effective against a variety of coronavirus strains (except a strain out of South Africa) and a growing body of evidence that vaccinated people may be unlikely to have an asymptomatic infection or transmit COVID-19.

Key takeaways for employers from this new public guidance are:

Fully vaccinated employees that are not in healthcare settings do not need to quarantine following an exposure to a person with COVID-19 unless they develop symptoms. Notably, the previously posted guidance on quarantines from both the CDC and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services remains posted without change, and it requires that the vaccinated individual be within three months of their vaccination date in order to avoid quarantine. Because the latest CDC guidance focuses on matters outside the workplace, employers should check the latest updates when dealing with an employee whose vaccination was more than three months ago.

The protocols for vaccinated people who are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms remain the same; that is, they should still get tested and stay home from work.

Vaccinated people may gather with other vaccinated people in private settings without masks or social distancing. However, it is not recommended that vaccinated people gather with unvaccinated people from different households. Workplaces are not considered to be private settings, so gathering in the workplace without masks, even for vaccinated people, remains unacceptable under the latest guidance.

Masks, social distancing, avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces, and covering coughs and sneezes are still recommended in public spaces, including workplaces, for all individuals regardless of vaccination status.

Employers who want to change their workplace protocols in response to the latest guidance should be cautious and review the latest guidance applicable to their industry. Reach out to any of our labor & employment attorneys for assistance in determining if changing your workplace COVID practices at this stage is appropriate, linked below.

Brooks Pierce is dedicated to keeping our clients fully informed during the COVID-19 crisis. For more information, please visit our [COVID-19 Response Resources](#) page.