

**REVISED NOTICE TO NORTHERN DISTRICT COURT EMPLOYEES  
REGARDING COVID-19 VACCINATION AND TESTING POLICY**

Effective September 27, 2021, in light of the recent surge of COVID-19 cases in Mississippi, particularly Delta variant cases, and Mississippi's status as an area of high or substantial transmission for COVID-19, consistent with the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force's COVID-19 Model Workplace Safety Principles, recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and guidance from the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, with the consent of all judges, the Northern District Court of Mississippi implemented a COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing Policy ("Policy") as an addendum to its Protocols for Reopening Courthouses and Resuming Normal Operations ("Protocols"). The Policy and the Protocols were recently revised effective March 1, 2022.

The Policy applies to all Northern District Court employees. As specified in the Protocols, the term "employees" includes "all persons working for any Court unit inside any Northern District Court building."

Pursuant to the Policy, all employees must provide proof of vaccination against COVID-19 or be tested twice weekly for COVID-19. Any employee who fails to provide proof of vaccination against COVID-19 or proof of negative COVID-19 test results twice weekly will not be permitted to enter Northern District Court buildings or Northern District Court events. Employees who fail to provide proof of vaccination or who decline to provide their vaccination status will be considered unvaccinated.

On Monday and Thursday of each week, unvaccinated employees must provide proof that they have been tested for COVID-19 within the prior three days. Proof of COVID-19 test results must be provided to an appropriate supervisor or other designated person,<sup>1</sup> and may be submitted electronically. Test results from home-test or self-test kits are not acceptable unless indicated otherwise.

There are numerous places within the Northern District to obtain free COVID-19 testing. To the extent free testing is not available, the cost of testing is the responsibility of each unvaccinated employee.

Time off during the workday generally will not be permitted for testing pursuant to this Policy. However, an employee's supervisor may authorize leave for no more than one hour (to travel to the testing site, complete testing, and return to work) for an employee to be tested pursuant to this Policy.

An employee's inability to comply with this Policy will not, on that ground alone, entitle such employee to telework. Unvaccinated employees who telework are not excused from the twice-weekly testing requirements.

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<sup>1</sup> All Chambers and Clerk's Office employees should provide test results to Connie Armstrong or other designated Human Resource representative. All Probation/Pretrial Services employees should provide test results to Lori Goodwin or other Human Resource representative designated by the Unit Executive.

Vaccination against COVID-19 or twice weekly COVID-19 testing is a mandatory condition of employment and a mandatory condition of continued employment. Failure to submit proof of COVID-19 vaccination or twice weekly testing may subject an employee to disciplinary action, including leave without pay or termination of employment. Misrepresentation about vaccination status or test results may result in termination of employment.

Employees who are unvaccinated due to medical or religious reasons may request a reasonable accommodation. Requests for accommodations due to medical or religious reasons must be individualized and based on an employee's particular circumstances, and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. A request for an accommodation due to medical or religious reasons does not excuse an unvaccinated employee from otherwise complying with the Protocols.

The Policy, as revised, and this Revised Notice are effective on March 1, 2022. They may be further revised and shall remain in place until further notice. Should you have questions about the Policy, the Protocols, or this Revised Notice, please contact your immediate supervisor.