

Unitarian Society of Germantown

Medical Exemption from the Vaccination Requirement in the COVID Safety Covenant

5/24/2022

Background and Purpose

In early 2022, as the COVID pandemic surge was subsiding and the USG building was reopening for in-person worship and other activities, the USG Board of Trustees approved a covenant for COVID safety (see below). The covenant includes a requirement that anyone who enters the building who is age five or older pledges that they are fully vaccinated against COVID. If eligible for a booster, in-person participation also requires that individuals have received at least one booster.

Some individuals are unable to receive the COVID vaccine because of medical contraindications that include severe allergic reactions to the first dose of vaccine, known allergies to one or more components of the vaccines, or other vaccine-related adverse reactions. With the intention to balance inclusivity and safety, it was recognized that a mechanism was needed for people who are unable to be fully vaccinated to attend in-person activities, if they so desire. This document outlines steps individuals can take to obtain a medical exemption if they cannot meet the first item in the covenant. Individuals who obtain a medical exemption will be expected to meet other covenant requirements.

USG COVID Safety Covenant

The text below is the Board-approved covenant for COVID safety with the addition of a provision for medical exemption from vaccination.

USG welcomes you to participate in the life of our spiritual community. If you enter the building, you agree with loving kindness that:

- you and anyone with you who is age 5 or older are fully vaccinated. If you are eligible for a booster, you have had at least one booster*
- you will wear a mask covering your nose and mouth in accordance with USG requirements
- you will follow all other COVID Safety Protocols and requirements, including social distancing, that USG may have in place at that time, and
- you are free of COVID symptoms or recent known exposure to COVID.

* If you are not fully vaccinated, we warmly invite you to participate in Zoom services every Sunday and in other USG activities on Zoom. And please get vaccinated and boosted if you are eligible. If you are unable to be fully vaccinated for medical reasons and would like to attend services or other activities at USG in person, you can submit a written request for an exemption with a note from your healthcare provider to covidtaskforce@usguu.org. For more detail see the Medical Exemption Procedure.

Medical Exemption Procedure

The following procedure outlines steps for medical exemptions to the COVID vaccine covenant.

1. Individuals who cannot comply with the COVID vaccination covenant for medical reasons need to document in writing why they are medically unable to be vaccinated *and* submit a note from their healthcare provider providing a medically valid reason for a medical exemption from the vaccination requirement.
2. Submit the documentation developed in step 1 to the Chair of the COVID Task Force at covidtaskforce@usg.org
3. The Chair of the COVID Task Force will consult with the healthcare professionals on the COVID Task Force as needed and will respond in writing to the request for an exemption. The chair of the COVID Task Force will keep track of the exemptions.

References

Use of COVID-19 Vaccines in the United States <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/clinical-considerations/covid-19-vaccines-us.html#Appendix-C>