



**CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE
M E M O R A N D U M**

October 6, 2021

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Marcus D. Jones, City Manager
SUBJECT: COVID-19 Update

Mayor & Council,

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, our organization's focus has been on helping to ensure the safety and well-being of our staff while providing the core, essential services that our residents and community rely on. From premium pay to extended medical leave to remote work to renovating our facilities to be more COVID-compliant, we have kept our staff's health as a constant priority so they could serve our community.

For the past several months, as COVID-19 vaccines have become more widely available, we have been proactive, thoughtful, and measured while focusing on positively encouraging staff to get vaccinated and being clear that we believe that the best way to protect our employees, community and operations is for everyone to get vaccinated.

A little more than a month ago we announced a vaccine reward program to encourage vaccinations among our workforce. We also launched an internal communications campaign aimed at peer-to-peer encouragement and providing forums for employees to hear from medical leaders.

I am pleased to announce to you that 679 employees got vaccinated in September and our vaccination rate is currently at 70 percent – up from 62 percent. As you will see in the chart below, our operational departments are leading the way and we compare very favorably to the county and state-level vaccination rates (please see attached chart).

Largest % increase in vaccination rate for Operational Departments		Top 4 departments for total increase in vaccinations		
HNS	+13%	CMPD	184	+8%
CFD	+12%	CFD	145	+12%
CDOT	+11%	CLT Water	81	+9%
Aviation	+10%	Aviation	65	+10%

Even with this progress we know we need to continue our efforts and we will be taking two additional steps to encourage vaccinations and protect our staff:

1. COVID-19 vaccines will be a condition of employment for all new hires. This will go into effect immediately and will be included in all new job postings for city positions.
2. Employees must be vaccinated to be eligible for the Wellness Incentive program, which is part of the employee's benefit plan. The wellness incentive is achieved by more than 95 percent of our health plan members and is worth an average of \$775.

Finally, as we consider next steps, we are waiting for information from the Department of Labor regarding the White House's plan on new testing and vaccine requirements for employers. If the Department of Labor requires that unvaccinated employees be reimbursed for time or cost of testing, this requirement would weigh heavily on any final determination we make related to testing or vaccine requirements. Up to this point, testing programs have been difficult to implement. Any program that we structure would be designed to be efficient and minimize the cost to the City.

I am very proud of the dedication and commitment of our entire team and I thank you for your continued support.

Marcus D. Jones
City Manager