

## **BFN COVID-19 policy**

effective 12/14/21 until further notice

### *Vaccines*

Berkeley Food Network (BFN) reserves the right to require all Employees and Volunteers to be vaccinated against the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) via one of the vaccines approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and to further furnish proof of completed vaccination to their Supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator.

As a public-facing emergency food assistance organization, BFN is considered an essential business. In addition to remaining open during the pandemic and other emergency situations, regular business at BFN necessitates a good deal of personal interface with a variety of community members, including the very young, the very old, and those with pre-existing medical conditions that could make them more susceptible to either catching or experiencing severe complications (up to and including death) from COVID-19. We must place equal emphasis on the health and safety of our employees, our volunteers, and the clients we serve.

Employees and volunteers may request a reasonable accommodation for exemption from this policy if they have a documented medical exemption or sincerely-held religious beliefs that preclude them from receiving a vaccination. Such requests must be made to the Supervisor or Volunteer Coordinator and accompanied by supporting documentation.

As per state and federal law, any and all records relating to COVID-19 vaccination status; including but not limited to proof of vaccination, request(s) for exemption from vaccination, and documents submitted in support of any such request(s) for exemption; will be kept confidential. Any and all physical documentation will be maintained in a secure, locked location; only the employee's Supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator will retain the key(s) to this location. Any and all electronic documentation will be kept in a password-protected area of the BFN Cloud Drive, with only the employee's Supervisor or the Volunteer Coordinator having access.

Employees and Volunteers must note that while circumstances will be assessed on an individual basis, a reasonable accommodation request for exemption from vaccination is not a guarantee that this request will be granted. Requests can be denied if honoring them would result in undue hardship and/or a direct threat to the BFN environment due to the significant risk of substantial harm to the health or safety of others that cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodation.

### *Booster shots/Additional vaccine doses*

Employees and Volunteers are encouraged to receive additional vaccine doses (also called 'booster' shots) to lower their chances of contracting or carrying more contagious variants of COVID-19, in line with FDA and CDC recommendations.

## *Masks*

Due to the highly transmissible nature of emerging variants of COVID-19, in addition to the rapidity with which variants have developed and spread across the world, BFN Employees and Volunteers are required to wear masks both inside the warehouse and outside on the pantry line. Clients are likewise required to wear a mask when receiving food in the pantry line. The masking policy will remain in place until further notice.

It should be noted that, in addition to BFN's internal policies regarding mask-wearing, the State of California has instituted an indoor mask mandate effective December 15, 2021, to January 15, 2022. BFN will continue to mandate masks indoors and on the outdoor pantry line, as outlined above, after January 15, 2022, until otherwise communicated.

Employees and Volunteers must observe the following mask-wearing practices:

1. Wear **either** an N95 mask **or** two layered masks. Layered masks must consist of **either** two disposable masks **or** one disposable mask underneath a reusable, washable cloth mask.
2. Disposable masks must be discarded, and cloth masks must be laundered, on a regular basis or whenever they become soiled.
3. Masks must cover mouth **and** nose at all times, including and especially when speaking.
4. Masks may be removed only under the following circumstances:
  - a. Outside the warehouse (**except** when working on the pantry line).
  - b. In the restroom.
  - c. When eating or drinking in the community room or in an office with a door.
  - d. To quickly take a sip of a beverage or use a tissue.
  - e. Individuals should exercise good judgment regarding any of the above-named circumstances, **especially** when in proximity to others.

## *When Testing is Required:*

Employees and Volunteers will be required to complete an antigen "rapid" test and/or a PCR test under the following circumstances:

1. Known **exposure** to COVID-19 through close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19 within the time period that person was contagious (either before or after testing positive for COVID-19).
2. Experiencing any COVID-19 **symptoms**:
  - a. Fever or chills
  - b. Cough
  - c. Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - d. Fatigue
  - e. Muscle or body aches
  - f. Headache
  - g. New loss of taste or smell

- h. Sore throat
  - i. Congestion or runny nose
  - j. Nausea or vomiting
  - k. Diarrhea
3. Commercial **travel** (ie, airline, cruise, or Amtrak) requiring extended periods of time in close proximity with others, either while traveling or at a destination (ie, a convention or festival).
- a. The Supervisor and/or Volunteer Coordinator will exercise judgment regarding exposure risks associated with travel, taking into account factors such as:
    - i. Whether any and all venues visited at the destination enforce precautions such as masking, vaccinations, or negative antigen or PCR tests.
    - ii. Whether the governing entities of the destination (local, state, or national government) enforce best practices in line with those of the City of Berkeley, County of Alameda, and/or State of California, to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.
    - iii. Current local infection rates at the destination or at any stops/layovers along the way.
    - iv. Whether the employee or volunteer experienced additional exposure to infected individuals during travel or at destination; and whether the employee or volunteer is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

*Testing procedures:*

There are two types of COVID-19 tests: (1) Antigen tests, also called rapid tests or at-home tests, which provide results within 10-20 minutes and (2) PCR tests, which are administered by a health authority and sent to a laboratory for processing. PCR tests are believed to be more accurate, while antigen tests are faster but carry a slim possibility of giving a false positive.

**Volunteers:** Volunteers will be required to receive a negative PCR test result before returning to volunteer. Should a volunteer receive a positive PCR or antigen test, they will be asked to self-isolate until they receive a negative PCR test result. Any other people potentially exposed to infection through contact with this individual at BFN will be contacted and asked to test in accordance with these guidelines.

**Employees:** Employees will be provided an antigen test to complete and required to undergo a PCR test. If the antigen test is negative, employees will be permitted to continue working on-site until a negative PCR test result is obtained, provided they continue to observe best practices for masking and handwashing and remain asymptomatic. Should either antigen or PCR test come back positive, or should the employee begin to develop symptoms, the employee(s) in question will immediately be asked to self-isolate until a negative PCR test result. Any others potentially exposed to transmission through contact with this individual at BFN will be contacted and asked to test in accordance with these guidelines.

*Other:*

Volunteers and Employees will be asked to self-identify to the Volunteer Coordinator or their Supervisor if they have been exposed to COVID-19 or are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19. The symptoms and definition of 'exposure' will be posted at all building entrances.

BFN reserves the right to update or rescind this policy at any point. This policy will remain effective from December 10, 2021, until such time as it is announced to be no longer in effect, or replaced by an updated policy.