

# Executive Order 1-71 – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**Updated 11.8.2021**

## 1. When does Executive Order 1-71: COVID-19 Mitigating Safety Measures go into effect?

October 8, 2021

## 2. Who does Executive Order 1-71 apply to?

Any person who is an employee of the City and maintained on the official roster, with the exception of elected official and members of City boards and commissions.

## 3. Is there a scheduled expiration date for Executive Order 1-71: COVID-19 Mitigating Safety Measures?

Currently, there is no scheduled expiration date for Executive Order 1-71. The requirement is in effect until further notice.

## 4. When are COVID-19 diagnostic test results due?

City employees shall submit COVID-19 diagnostic test results on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of every month. For any COVID-19 diagnostic test performed from the 1<sup>st</sup> through the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, the test results shall be submitted on or before the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the same month. For any COVID-19 diagnostic test performed from the 16<sup>th</sup> to the 31<sup>st</sup>, the test results shall be submitted on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the following month.

## 5. Where can I find more information on COVID-19 testing and vaccination locations?

Please visit the E.O. 1-71: COVID-19 Mitigating Safety Measures information page at [http://houstontx.gov/hr/covid\\_testing.html](http://houstontx.gov/hr/covid_testing.html).

## 6. Who is exempted from the COVID-19 testing mandated by EO 1-71?

Employees who submit proof of being fully vaccinated and employees who have requested and been approved for a medical or religious exemption are exempted from COVID-19 diagnostic testing requirements mandated by Executive Order 1-71.

## 7. Where do I submit my supporting documentation such as request for an accommodation (medical or religious), proof of being fully vaccinated, or COVID-19 test results?

You will submit this information through the COVID-19 Portal for City Employees. Employees will receive the link to the COVID-19 Portal for City via various mass communication mechanisms (e.g. broadcast email, electronic bulletin boards, etc.) on October 8, 2021.

## 8. What type of documentation will be accepted as proof of being fully vaccinated?

All employees opting to request a fully vaccinated exemption to the testing requirement will be required to upload proof of COVID-19 vaccination such as a photocopy/image of their COVID-19 vaccination card(s), COVID-19 vaccination record from your healthcare or vaccine provider, MyChart, or similar medical record app, or other forms or documentation approved by the HR Director.

# Executive Order 1-71 – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**Updated 11.8.2021**

## 9. I have misplaced my COVID-19 vaccination card(s). How do I obtain a copy of my COVID-19 vaccination(s)?

Employees can request a copy of their COVID-19 vaccination records from their healthcare provider or vaccine provider, access it through their electronic medical records (i.e., MyChart, etc.) or contact the state in which they received the vaccine through the state's affiliated Health Department (e.g. Texas - [ImmTrac2, the Texas Immunization Registry.](#))

## 10. What is a COVID-19 PCR Test?

The polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test for COVID-19 is a molecular test that analyzes your upper respiratory specimen, looking for genetic material (ribonucleic acid or RNA) of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. The PCR test has been the gold standard test for diagnosing COVID-19 since it was authorized for use in February 2020. It's accurate and reliable.

## 11. Does Executive Order 1-71 apply to Elected Officials, Board or Commission members?

No. Elected Officials and Board and Commission members are excluded from the requirements of E.O. 1-71.

## 12. Are volunteers, contractors, agency temporary employees, and work-study student expected to comply with Executive Order 1-71?

While volunteers, contractors, agency temporary employees, and work-study students are not required to comply with Executive Order 1-71, we do encourage them to get tested regularly or get vaccinated.

## 13. What type of corrective action will be considered for employees who refuse to comply with Executive Order 1-71?

Department directors or their designee are responsible for administering appropriate corrective action for non-compliance with Executive Order 1-71.

## 14. Are unvaccinated individuals who have had COVID-19 within the last 90 days provided an accommodation for the weekly testing requirement?

Any employee who believes they have a medical reason to be exempted from the COVID-19 testing frequency mandated by Executive Order 1-71, should request a medical accommodation. ***Until you have an approved exemption, you are still required to submit COVID-19 diagnostic testing results by the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.***

# Executive Order 1-71 – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**Updated 11.8.2021**

**15. If an employee presents documentation that the employee has the antibodies for COVID-19, does the employee still need to submit COVID-19 diagnostic testing results on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month?**

Yes, an employee who has COVID-19 antibodies must submit COVID-19 diagnostic test results on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, unless the employee has an approved exemption (i.e., submitted proof of being fully vaccinated or has been approved for a medical or religious exemption.)

**16. Who is responsible for the cost associate with COVID-19 diagnostic testing?**

Employees are encouraged to use free testing sites provided by the state, county and/or local health department. Employees should expect to incur costs associated with COVID-19 diagnostic testing required by E.O. 1-71 if the employee chooses not to use one of the free testing sites or if the testing provider submits a claim to the employee's insurer.

**17. What is the employee's reporting to work status when unable to schedule a test in a timely manner or while waiting for test results?**

All employees are expected to report to work, as usual. However, employees who are sick or ill should report their absence to their immediate supervisor and if the employee is experiencing COVID-19 related symptoms, the employee should consult with their personal healthcare provider and their department's FMLA Coordinator.

**18. Are supervisors responsible for rearranging an employee's regular work schedule to comply with E.O. 1-71?**

No. Testing should be completed on the employee's own time. Appropriate accrued leave may be used to test or receive the vaccine if you choose to schedule such services during your working hours. Any absence away from work must be approved in accordance with your department's absence policy.

**19. How will new employees be acclimated to E.O. 1-71?**

**Updated 11.8.2021**

Newly hired employees will be included in the testing pool of employees, provided they do not have an approved exemption (i.e., submitted proof of being fully vaccinated or have been approved for a medical or religious exemption), during the first testing period after their start date. (Example – Start date November 8, 2021, including in the testing pool beginning with the reporting period November 16, 2021 – November 30, 2021)

**20. I have an approved ADA accommodation. Do I still need to comply with E.O. 1-71?**

Yes, you must comply with E.O. 1-71 unless you have an approved exemption (i.e., submitted proof of being fully vaccinated or have been approved for a medical or religious exemption) for compliance with E.O. 1-71.

# Executive Order 1-71 – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

**Updated 11.8.2021**

**21. I am fully vaccinated and have received an approved exemption to the testing requirements required by E.O. 1-71. Do I need to do anything else?**

At this time, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers a person as being fully vaccinated against the virus that causes COVID-19 (1) two weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines or (2) two weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as the Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine. If the CDC changes its definition of "fully vaccinated", information will be communicated to employees and if necessary, provided a grace period to keep the exemption associated with being fully vaccinated for compliance with E.O. 1-71.

**22. If an employee gets the COVID-19 vaccine and experiences side effects from it, what leave should be used if the employee is too sick to work?**

Any employee should use accrued available leave such as sick, vacation, personal, etc. if they are too sick to work due to the side effects of COVID-19 vaccine. Wellness time cannot be used to cover an absence related to sickness or the side-effects from the COVID-19 vaccine.

**23. What type of leave does the employee have to use if they test positive for COVID-19 and are required to quarantine or isolate?**

Employees who test positive to COVID-19 may have their time recorded as sick, vacation, personal, compensatory leave, PTO or other leave authorized by state law or be carried in an unpaid status. Employees may also be eligible for Worker's Compensation.

**24. Will my supervisor, manager, or department director know my vaccination status?**

No. All information collected through the COVID-19 Test Portal for City Employees is considered confidential and access will be on a need-to-know basis only.

**25. To whom should an employee direct questions directly related to Executive Order 1-71?**

It is recommended that employee questions be directed to their department's Client Relations Manager or their department's HR liaison.

**26. I am having difficulty logging in to the portal on my mobile device. What should I do?**

Log in to Wi-Fi on your mobile device and try again. If that does not work, log in via your computer.

**27. How long does it take for COVID-19 diagnostic test results to be received?**

COVID-19 diagnostic test results (PCR) are generally available within 2-5 days of the test being performed. It is highly recommended that City employees do not wait until the last few days to submit to the testing requirements, as doing so could result in their status as being reported as non-compliant.

**28. I have requested and been approved for a fully vaccinated, religious accommodation, or medical accommodation exemption. Do I need to submit to COVID-19 diagnostic testing?**

No, you are compliant with E.O. 1-71, at this time.