

Nick,

We hope this message finds you well. Below you will find the answers to your recent set of questions. Our executive management team has reviewed the questions and provided answers. We must preface this with the fact that things are very “fluid” as we’re sure you can imagine. For example, the new mask mandate that just came out the 15<sup>th</sup> of December. So, the information provided below is current at time of delivery of this email.

- 1) Does the Fire Authority require regular Covid tests among staff who are not vaccinated?

We at OCFA test anyone who begins to develop signs of illness, and especially those related to COVID. This includes a rapid test which gives results within 15 minutes and that is followed up by a PCR test with results given in 24-48 hours. The ill employee is sent home until negative results are returned from the PCR. If an employee is found to be COVID positive, tracing is initiated to find if anyone is considered a close contact (exposure) to that person and testing of those individuals (ring testing) is immediately conducted. This includes a rapid test and PCR testing if necessary, along with close symptom monitoring. This process is for all employees regardless of vaccination status.

- 2) What was the thought process behind OCFA's vaccination policies?

OCFA continues to follow OC HCA (Orange County Health Care Agency) requirements for vaccinations.

- 3) And does the state's vaccine mandate for local frontline staff who work in healthcare settings not apply to OCFA?

It does not apply to OCFA responders. They do not work “in” healthcare settings. The State mandate was specific to those who have extended periods of exposure over an extended period of time. This requirement was specific to those who work 40-hour per week in these types of facilities. Basically, people who work in healthcare settings 40 hours or more per week. OCFA responders go into a healthcare setting for a short duration to assess and transport a patient, then offload the patient at a hospital. This is not considered an extended period of exposure. Additionally, full personal protective equipment (PPE) is provided to all OCFA employees during these times. The PPE protects both OCFA personal from any exposure to the patients and also protects the patients from any exposure to OCFA personnel. OCFA continues to monitor the evolving situation and mandates as it relates to vaccines and testing, but currently there is no mandate for OCFA to do either.

Thank you for reaching out.

