

September 17, 2021

Dear Beatitudes Community,

Beatitudes Campus mission commits all of us to a model of service for our residents – to inspire purpose and vibrancy in all that we do. Our mission compels us to do all we can so that we do no harm to the ones we love and serve. We are so grateful to our Beatitudes Strong staff, particularly in the last 19 months, who have lived out our mission and worked hard to protect our Beatitudes family and ensure the safest environment possible.

We do, indeed, have a special responsibility, particularly now, to keep each other safe. I announced on Wednesday, September 15, that Beatitudes Campus is instituting a Mandatory Vaccination Policy for all staff members and contractors to be vaccinated against COVID-19 by November 15. Deploying everything we can – including infection control, social distancing, masks and vaccines – is the only way to slow down the spread of this dreaded virus. We had a special staff meeting to announce our decision. We invited Dr. Frank LoVecchio, an ER physician and medical director of clinical research at Arizona State University, and a highly regarded expert on infectious diseases to share with the staff the challenges he and his colleagues face on the front lines of the coronavirus crisis and to answer any questions people may have about the vaccine.

Below is a letter I sent to every staff member, informing them of the policy.

*I want to thank all of you for your steadfast support and flexibility throughout the past 19 months of this pandemic. I hope that you and your families are doing well despite the many challenges we have collectively faced and continue to experience because of the pandemic.*

*Over the past month, much has happened both nationally and locally within life plan communities, such as Beatitudes Campus, regarding COVID-19 vaccines and requiring staff to become vaccinated. As we have always said, we will follow the science, and the science overwhelmingly points to the vaccine's critical role in protecting our residents, our community and each other from this deadly disease.*

*We carefully deliberated and reviewed recommendations from scientists and the medical community and the requirements from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and we have made the decision to require all Beatitudes staff and contractors to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 by no later than November 15, 2021. Concomitant with this decision, on August 18, 2021, the White House announced an initiative to increase vaccination rates in America that included mandatory vaccinations for long-term care workers in nursing homes. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) followed quickly with an announcement of forthcoming regulation mandating vaccinations for all staff working in nursing homes. On September 9, 2021, President Biden signed an executive order that included the provision that 17 million health care workers at all facilities, hospitals, home health providers, dialysis centers and other health service providers that receive funds from Medicare and Medicaid be fully vaccinated.*

*This decision was not an easy one to make. We know that this requirement will affect a portion of our staff. But as COVID-19 variants emerge and proliferate, it is critical that we protect everyone who lives and works at Beatitudes Campus. Our campus mission commits us to a model of service for our residents that promotes soundness of mind, spirit and body. We chose to work in the field of aging so that we could serve some of the most vulnerable people in our communities, and we owe it to them to take every measure possible to ensure the safest environment possible. Our residents and staff expect to be safe at Beatitudes Campus and we need to do everything we can to protect our Beatitudes family. We have a unique and special responsibility to keep the campus as safe as possible to protect our residents and staff, especially as the risk environment rises, as it has during this pandemic.*

*We understand that this may be a heavy and emotional issue for some staff. There will be a very limited allowance for exemptions for our staff from being vaccinated. Those exemptions will be for legitimate, fully documented medical reasons as well as fully documented long-held religious beliefs. We also understand that some Beatitudes staff will choose not to be vaccinated who do not qualify for one of the rare exemptions. We urge those employees to reconsider based on facts and science. We are all in this together. Together we serve our residents and together we have a collective responsibility to keep them as safe as possible. We encourage you to talk to your manager or director, or, alternatively, we will have our spiritual life team of Rev. Peggy Roberts and Rev. Andrew Moore as well as our nurse educator, Karen Mitchell, who can talk with you confidentially.*

*Beatitudes Campus policy for a vaccine requirement has been distributed, as well as the forms should you seek an exemption.*

*Please take a moment to reflect on why you chose to work at Beatitudes Campus and with the seniors who live here. The campus would not have a 56-year history of success without the contributions of a dedicated staff. Throughout this pandemic you have demonstrated your dedication and bravery in the face of unprecedented and challenging circumstances. The residents you love to serve, the residents you help to live their best, most successful and engaged life, are enriched by the Beatitudes team. They deserve to live in the safest community possible. We must do everything possible to deliver a safe environment for them.*

*We are Beatitudes Strong! Thank you.*

*Sincerely,*



*Michelle Just, President and CEO*

