

# PVHH Covid-19 Policy for Worksites

APPROVED BY BOARD OF DIRECTORS 8/23/23

## BACKGROUND:

The Covid-19 pandemic continues to present a health risk, although vaccination and appropriate distance precautions can mitigate this danger. On January 30, 2023 the Biden Administration announced its intent to end the national emergency and public health declarations that have been in place since early 2020 on May 11, 2023. This document seeks to provide a framework by which PVHH volunteers and staff can work as safely as possible given the significant relaxation of pandemic era precautions.

## Evaluating Risk

Everyone should evaluate their own individual risks of contracting the disease, including underlying medical conditions, living arrangements, and necessary contact with others who may be at increased risk. Nobody should feel any obligation to volunteer. Each person's primary concern should be their own and family's safety. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/understanding-risk.html>

## PRECAUTIONS:

### Vaccination

All staff and volunteers are strongly encouraged to stay up to date on their Covid-19 vaccinations. *As of May 1, 2023, Pioneer Valley Habitat will no longer be tracking the vaccination status of staff and volunteers.*

PVHH may schedule opt-in "vaccinated only" work days on the construction sites at the request of volunteers. No more than 1 or 2 work days per job site will be designated as "vaccinated only" per week. This is to accommodate volunteers who prefer to work with other vaccinated volunteers only. This will be administered as an "honor system", with participating volunteers representing that they are up-to-date on Covid vaccinations, as defined by the CDC from time-to-time.

### Close Contacts

Persons who have had recent confirmed exposure to a person infected with Covid-19 and are asymptomatic (no symptoms) shall wear a mask when working indoors (inside a PVHH building under construction while "indoor" work, as defined below) until a negative test at day 5+ after exposure.

Site supervisors must sign in all volunteers working at a construction site, so that PVHH will have a record of attendance if needed for contact tracing.

### Illness

No staff or volunteer is permitted to come to a worksite after they test positive for Covid-19 until after the cessation of symptoms and a negative Covid-19 test (at home tests are fine).

No staff or volunteer is permitted to come to a work site if they have one or more symptoms of a transmissible respiratory illness (fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, severe fatigue, loss of smell and/or taste, unexplained diarrhea) until the symptom(s) have abated for at least 48 hours

without use of fever-reducing medication. Testing for Covid-19 ≥5 days after exposure or onset of symptoms is recommended.

If a staff person or a volunteer learns that they may have been COVID-19 positive on a work day, they shall notify Executive Director Megan McDonough as soon as possible for contact tracing purposes.

## **Masks**

During times of high spread of Covid-19 the Executive Director in consultation with the Safety Committee may mandate masks indoors.

When volunteers and/or staff are working together in close proximity indoors, especially in an unventilated area, masks are encouraged.

Masks shall be made available at all public indoor events organized by Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity so that attendees can choose if they would like to wear one.

## **Distancing**

Whenever possible, maintain a distance of more than 3 feet between individuals.

Do not come to a PVHH work site unless you have signed up on VolunteerUP (for shared workdays); or have received specific clearance from the work site coordinator, for individual, separate tasks.

## **Hand Sanitation**

Each worksite will have an adequate supply of hand sanitizer. If this is not the case, notify the supervisor.

## **Ventilation**

In times of high community transmission of respiratory illness (such as Covid-19, RSV, Flu, Etc), mechanical ventilation should be used. Each floor of a house under construction may be equipped with an exhaust fan and incorporated ductwork that provides for regular exchanges of air, when “indoor” work has been reached, as defined below. The blower and ducts should be tightly coupled to a window to ensure that all the air is blown directly outside. All other windows in that room should be closed. Partially open a window in all the other rooms.

***When are you indoors during construction?*** Work within the walls is still considered outdoors when all windows and doors are opened widely, and sheetrock has not been installed on interior walls. This section of the policy addresses the situation that pertains once floors are divided by interior sheetrock.

## **SUBCONTRACTORS:**

Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity encourages subcontractors (including vocational students) to be up-to-date vaccinated (as defined by the CDC from time-to-time) for Covid-19 but does not track or require vaccination. ***No one is allowed to be on site without first notifying and scheduling with Habitat.*** If you have not scheduled your work with Habitat, please call to check with your Habitat contact for approval before entering the site. Notification is required to plan for social distancing and to avoid overlap on “vaccinated only” volunteer days.