

# COVID-19:

VARIANTS, VACCINES, AND THE PATH FORWARD

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# Welcome

John Urbahns,  
President & CEO, Greater Fort Wayne, Inc.

# Welcome

Hallie Custer,  
VP, Human Resources

# In this Together

- Challenging times for all of us
- We are here and ready to serve
- Closely monitoring and using our healthcare experts' guidance
- Partnering with other community experts to share information

# Today's Experts

- COVID-19 Community Update – Dr. Matthew Sutter, Allen Co Dept of Health
- COVID-19 Vaccination Data – Mindy Waldron, Allen Co Dept of Health
- One Year Later: what works & OSHA ETS – Dr. Knipp, Parkview Occupational Health and Anna Belote, Parkview Health
- The Law and COVID – H. Joseph Cohen, Barrett McNagny LLP
- Q&A

# COVID-19 Community Update

Dr. Matthew Sutter, M.D., MBA, FACEP  
Health Commissioner, Allen County Dept. of Health

# COVID-19 Vaccination Data

Mindy Waldron, BS, REHS, CFSP

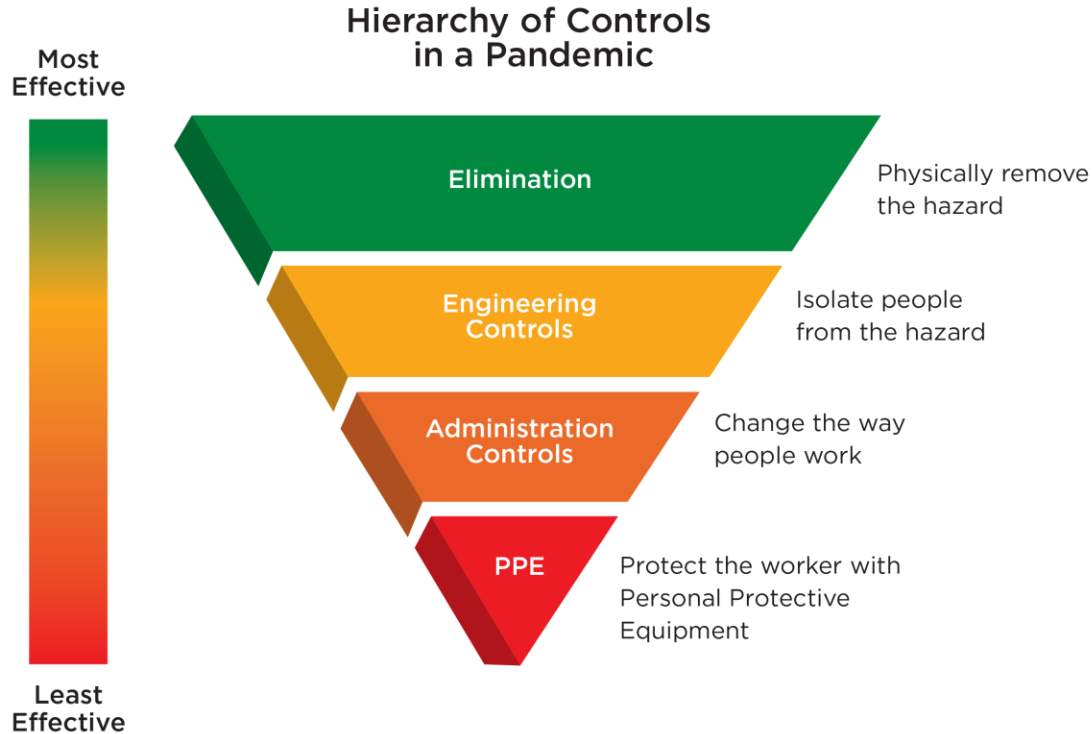
Administrator, Allen County Dept. of Health

# One Year Later and OSHA ETS

Dr. Michael Knipp,  
CMO, Parkview Occupational Health  
Anna Belote,  
Director of Safety, Parkview Health



# MORE THAN A MASK



Intended to minimize exposure risk.

Source:  
[CDC.gov/NIOSH/Topics/Hierarchy/default.html](https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/hierarchy/default.html)

# Hierarchy of Controls | Examples

ELIMINATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sick people stay home.</li></ul>
ENGINEERING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Plexiglass barrier</li></ul>
ADMINISTRATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One-way traffic (walking patterns)</li><li>• Social Distancing</li></ul>
PPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Masks – intended to protect <b><i>environment from wearer</i></b></li><li>• Respirators (n95) – intended to protect <b><i>wearer from environment</i></b></li></ul>

Where do vaccines fit?

- *Most closely fit as an elimination strategy*

# OSHA COVID-19 ETS

## What is it?

- OSHA COVID-19 Emergency Temporary Standard
- Effective June 21, 2021; compliance by July 21, 2021
- Source: [OSHA.gov/Coronavirus/ETS](https://www.osha.gov/Coronavirus/ETS)
- Intent:
  - Protect healthcare workers from COVID-19 exposure
- How:
  - Calls out specific work environments and healthcare delivery scenarios
  - Requires employers to evaluate for its applicability and develop compliant plan, processes, and procedures
- Other industries could be added – Court filing June 24, 2021 by UFCW and AFL-CIO
  - ETS, “fails to protect employees outside the healthcare industry who face a similar grave danger from occupational exposure to COVID-19.”

# OSHA COVID-19 ETS

## Other Industries

- June 10, 2021 – OSHA released guidance for industries not covered under the COVID ETS
  - UPDATED AUGUST 13
    - Reflects CDC updated guidance from 7/27/21
    - Delta variant reality
  - Contains practical strategies and information to assist employers in compliance with other current OSHA standards that apply
    - *PPE standards* (general industry, 29 CFR 1910 Subpart 1) – requires using gloves, eye and face protection, and respiratory protection
    - *General Duty Clause* (Section 5(a)(1) of the OSH Act of 1970, 29, USC 654(a)(1) requires employers to furnish each worker “employment and place of employment, which are **free from recognized hazards** that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm.”

# The Law and COVID-19

**H. Joseph Cohen**

**215 E. Berry Street  
Fort Wayne, IN 46802  
260-423-8861**



# Vaccine Mandate

- Ethical considerations
- Federal requirements regarding reasonable accommodations to employees with disabilities
- Federal laws requiring employers to provide reasonable accommodations to employees with sincerely held religious beliefs

*Klaasen, et al. v. Trustees of Indiana University*

# Confidentiality of COVID-19 Test

- The Americans with Disabilities Act provides strict confidentiality requirements to employers regarding their employees that have tested positive for COVID-19
- What message can be sent to co-workers?

# Business/Employer Considerations



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## Q&A

*Please use the Q&A function in Zoom to submit a question*



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*Q: How can we encourage our employees to get vaccinated?*

Answer:

- Make information available to answer their questions on vaccine safety and efficacy.
- Allow paid time off work to get vaccines.
- Schedule on-site vaccines. Parkview Employer Solutions can assist (260-373-9017).
- Consider incentives to motivate.

*Q: Legally, can we mandate vaccines for our employees?  
Are they allowed religious or medical exemptions?*

Answer:

- Generally, an employer can mandate vaccines for their employees.
  - However, an employee can be exempt from the mandate as a result of a religious exception or as a result of an underlying medical condition.

*Q: Are we allowed to ask our employees their vaccination status? Do they have to provide validation of their response?*

Answer:

- In general terms, you can ask if an employee has been fully vaccinated in the scenario of a vaccine mandate.
- At this point, there is nothing that prevents an employer for requesting some form of validation, oral or in writing, from the employee.

*Q: If people have already taken the step to get vaccinated, do they need to use other precautions like masking and social distancing? Why or why not?*

Answer:

- In general, the CDC says if you are *fully* vaccinated, you do not need to wear a mask in outdoor settings. Except,
  - In areas with [high numbers of COVID-19 cases](#), consider wearing a mask in crowded outdoor settings and for activities with [close contact](#) with others who are not fully vaccinated.
- People who have a weakened immune system should continue to take all [precautions recommended for unvaccinated people, including wearing a well-fitted mask](#), until advised otherwise by their healthcare provider.

*Q: If employees opt to remain unvaccinated, it is a safe option to require them to be tested for COVID-19 weekly?*

Answer:

- Currently, the guidelines allow you to request an employee to be tested if they remain unvaccinated.

*Q: If we have in-person meetings or events planned, should we be cancelling or moving them online?*

Answer:

- Large face-to-face events are risky – consider following the CDC guidance on this: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/large-events/event-planners-and-attendees-faq.html>
- Parkview has made the decision to pause any planned events at the Parkview Mirro Center. Additionally, the Tapestry event sponsored by Parkview was moved to April 2022.
- Parkview has also paused any non-urgent meetings and has moved to Teams meetings whenever possible.

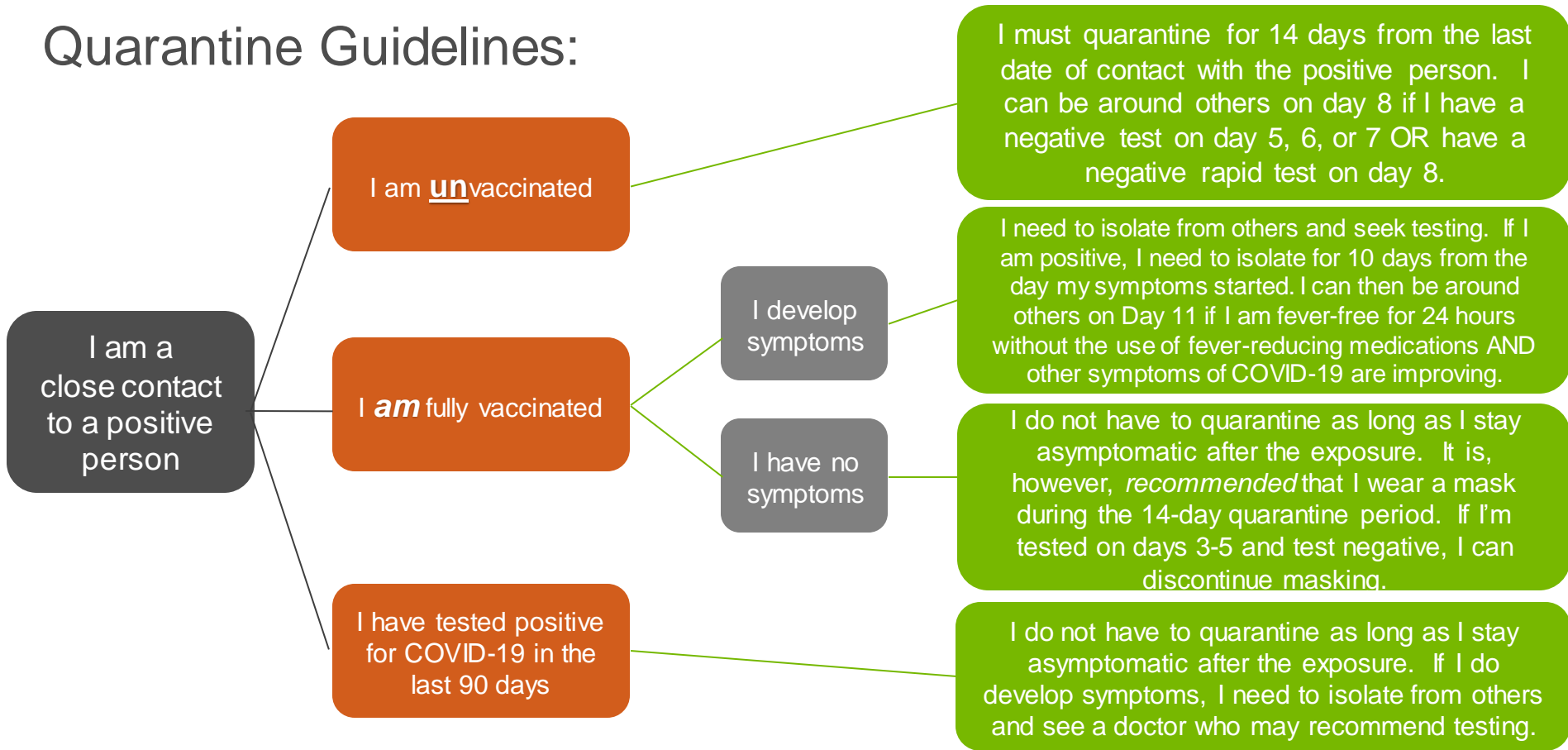
# Q: What are the current quarantine and isolation guidelines for someone who is vaccinated and someone unvaccinated?

## Isolation Guidelines:





# Quarantine Guidelines:



*Q: Do we need to contact trace individuals who may have been exposed to a COVID positive person through our business?*

Answer:

- Yes, you should notify anyone potentially exposed to a person positive with COVID-19 through your business so that they may take any necessary steps to quarantine.
- The Health Department may also reach out to those folks or to your business through their own contact tracing processes.

## *Q: What types of illness and hospitalizations are we seeing now? What about long-term effects of COVID-19?*

Answer:

- Over the last 30 days (7/16-8/16/21) the combined health system-wide daily census of hospitalized Covid-19 patients has **increased >4x** at Parkview Health
- Statewide, daily Covid-19 hospital census has **increased >3x** over same period
- Estimated 10-30% of persons who have had Covid-19 continue to experience debilitating symptoms months later (a.k.a. long Covid)
  - A recent New England Journal of Medicine Perspective article stated:
  - “Factoring in new infections in unvaccinated people, we can conservatively expect more than 15 million cases of long Covid resulting from this pandemic. And though data are still emerging, the average age of patients with long Covid is about 40, which means that the majority are in their prime working years. Given these demographics, long Covid is likely to cast a long shadow on our health care system and economic recovery.”

*Q: Should we be encouraging employees to work remotely if possible?*

Answer:

- Limiting the number of individuals in your business at any one time reduces the potential number of people impacted should someone test positive.
- Parkview continues to support on-going remote work for roles where remote work is possible.

*Q: Should we require masks be worn in our business?  
If yes, until when? What are the community indicators that help us understand what precautions should be in place in our locations?*

Answer:

- While there is no statewide mask mandate, businesses can *likely*\* require masking in the buildings over which they have control.
- We support following the CDC's updated guidance on indoor masking regardless of vaccination status: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

*Q: Can we require employees use PTO when they are off work for a COVID related absence? Is there another payment option for this time?*

Answer:

- At this point, I would not require an employee to use PTO for COVID related absences.
  - However, the leave could be unpaid unless the employee uses PTO.
- Another option would be for an employer to voluntarily opt into the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 which allows the employer payroll tax credits for wages paid to employees who were absent for COVID-19 reasons.

*Q: What is a trusted source for data and information on this virus and what is happening locally, statewide, and nationally?*

- Local:
  - Allen Co Dept of Health [allencountyhealth.com/get-informed/covid-19/](https://allencountyhealth.com/get-informed/covid-19/) and [allencountyhealth.com/get-vaccinated/its-worth-a-shot/](https://allencountyhealth.com/get-vaccinated/its-worth-a-shot/)
  - Parkview Business Connect [Parkview.com/BusinessConnect](https://Parkview.com/BusinessConnect)
- State:
  - Indiana COVID-19 Dashboard [coronavirus.in.gov](https://coronavirus.in.gov)
- National:
  - CDC [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)

# *FAQ Documents from the Allen County Department of Health*

## GENERAL



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## VACCINES



**SCAN ME**



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## *Parkview Business Connect*

[www.Parkview.com/BusinessConnect](http://www.Parkview.com/BusinessConnect)



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