

## **Influenza Vaccination – Important Notice**

Effective 14 July 2008, every deploying USAP participant is required to receive an influenza vaccination prior to deployment. The National Science Foundation concluded that influenza resulted in a significant impact to 2007-2008 operations and therefore, going forward, all deploying personnel must receive a flu immunization.

### **\*\* Requires Signature and Return \*\***

The *Influenza Vaccination - Read, Sign, Return* form requires your signature and return to RPSC Medical prior to purchase of deployment airline tickets. *Sign and return the document immediately.*

### **Obtaining Flu Immunizations:**

1) Participants will be given flu immunizations in Denver at orientation, in Christchurch prior to departing for Antarctica, or upon arrival at Palmer Station.

OR

2) Participants may obtain a flu immunization from their medical provider during the PQ process and submit the supporting documentation to RPSC Medical.

Below you will find Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) regarding the Influenza Vaccination program. Once you have reviewed all the information, please contact your hiring manager or the Human Resources department for questions relating to your employment. For medical-based inquiries, please contact the Medical department at 1.800.688.8606 ext 3.

### **FAQs**

Q: Why do we have to take the flu immunization to go to Antarctica?

A: A panel of medical consultants to the National Science Foundation has reviewed health care in Antarctica. Previously there have been influenza outbreaks that have had significant impact on productivity and health care costs. The medical experts recommended that the vaccine should be given in order to prevent the likelihood of similar outbreaks in the future. The NSF has accepted the recommendation and issued a directive making the immunizations mandatory. Success of this initiative was recognized throughout the 2008-2009 summer season with only two positive flu tests.

Q: Will having the immunization prevent me from getting the flu?

A: Not always. The vaccine is made up of multiple strains of influenza virus. There are many strains of “flu” viruses. Reports from all over the world are studied each year to predict the strains most likely to cause flu epidemics across different regions. The vaccine is 90% effective in protecting healthy young adults from illness when the vaccine strain is similar to the infecting strain. It is important for everyone to keep their immune systems healthy through regular exercise and good nutrition because the vaccine is less effective in preventing illness in older people and those that have diseases that reduce immunity.

Q: How will I get the immunization?

A: Ideally, you would get the immunization from your personal physician as part of the physical qualification (PQ) examination. However, the vaccine may not be available in the United States until late September, after many are on their way to Antarctica. The vaccine will also be given at the Denver HQ during deployment orientation, if available. The vaccine will be given in Christchurch if it is not available in the U.S. before deployment. It will be available at McMurdo, and given to the winter-over employees there. There is a one–two week period after getting the immunization before full protection has developed, so the earlier in the deployment cycle it can be given, the better for you and your contacts.

Q: What if I'm allergic? Will I have a localized reaction?

A: If you have had a severe reaction to a flu immunization in the past (severe reaction is throat, mouth or airway swelling, difficulty breathing, rash or hives), then bring documentation from the treating physician or emergency room. If you have a proven severe reaction to egg protein (same symptoms as above), then bring the report from your physician or allergist. People with previous severe reactions to the immunization or to egg protein should not receive the immunization. With proper documentation, you will be excused from the requirement. Localized reactions associated with the flu immunization may include mild problems such as soreness, redness or swelling where the immunization was given. These reactions have occurred less often as vaccine preparation has improved. They are generally not serious and do not justify exemption from the annual requirement for receiving the immunization.

Q: How can I learn more about the flu immunization?

A: To learn more about the flu vaccine, related benefits, risks, and precautions contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- Call 1-800-232-4636 (1-800-CDC-INFO)
- Visit CDC's website at [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu)

Remember to sign and return the ***Influenza Vaccination - Read, Sign, Return*** form.

Thank you.

Medical Director  
RPSC Medical Department

# INFLUENZA VACCINATION

## READ, SIGN, RETURN

**This sheet must be signed and returned to RPSC DSG before we can purchase deployment airline tickets.**

Every deploying USAP participant is required to receive an influenza vaccination prior to deployment.

You will receive the flu shot at no cost to you in Denver at orientation, in Christchurch prior to departing for Antarctica, or upon arrival at Palmer Station. Alternatively, you may obtain the flu shot from your medical provider during the PQ process and submit the supporting documentation to RPSC Medical, returned with your medical packet. Medical's fax is (303) 649-9275.

Receiving the vaccination is a condition of your deployment. Exemptions based on medical reasons will be considered on an individual basis and must be approved by RPSC Medical.

**Please sign, date and return this completed form to:**

Raytheon Polar Services  
DSG  
7400 S. Tucson Way  
Centennial, CO 80112

**Or fax to:**

(303) 705-0742

*My signature below indicates that I am aware of this requirement and agree to receive an influenza vaccine for the 2009-2010 season.*

**Please check one of the following options indicating your status:**

Grantee  Contract Employee  NANA Employee  Fulltime RPSC  Sub-Contractor

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Printed Name – Last, First and MI

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Signature

Date

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- Visit CDC's website at [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu)