

New York State Veterinary Medical Society

## New NY State Vaccination Mandate

On Monday December 13th new regulations will go into effect that require all indoor public spaces, including animal hospitals to either:

- a) Require masks to be worn
- OR
- b) Verify proof of vaccination status for all\* who enter  
(\*see details below)

In New York City and some other areas the public is already well used to having to show proof of vaccination to be able to eat at restaurants. Movie theaters and other entertainment venues have also been checking vaccinations for some time now. Earlier this year there was concern that requiring proof of vaccination would create unnecessary conflict with clients, but very soon the public will find that it is hard to do much at all without showing proof of vaccination, and may therefore be much more accepting of needing to show vaccination status to enter your animal hospital.

For those who are not vaccinated, even if it is for medical reasons, offering curbside checkin is a legally acceptable accomodation. There are no laws that prevent you from requiring proof of vaccination prior to admission, and HIPPA privacy laws do not apply to animal hospitals.

Next week we will issue an updated client information sheet/flyer (to members only) that you can use.

If you choose the "mask requirement" option:

### **Business/Venue Mask-Wearing Requirement**

Businesses and venues that implement a mask requirement must ensure all patrons past their second birthday and medically able to tolerate a face covering wear a mask at all times while indoors, except when eating or drinking.

If you choose the "vaccination verification" option:

### **Business/Venue Proof of Vaccination Requirement**

Businesses and venues that implement a proof of vaccination requirement must ensure that anyone 12 years of age or older is fully vaccinated before entering indoors. Businesses/venues can accept Excelsior Pass, Excelsior Pass Plus, SMART Health Cards issued outside of New York State, full-course vaccination through NYC COVID Safe app, a CDC Vaccination Card, or other official immunization record.

In accordance with CDC's definition, fully vaccinated is defined as 14 days past an individual's last vaccination dose in their initial vaccine series (14 days past the second shot of a two-dose Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine; 14 days past the one-shot Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccine). The State also accepts WHO-approved vaccines for these purposes. Parents and guardians can retrieve and store an Excelsior Pass and/or Excelsior Pass Plus for children or minors under legal guardianship.

Vaccines for children ages 5 – 11 have only been available since November 2021. Therefore, in order to enter a business or venue that implements a proof of vaccination requirement, children ages 5 – 11 only have to show proof of having had at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccination.

Vaccines have been available for 16–17-year-olds since April 2021 and for 12 –15-year-olds since May 2021. At the time of the determination, 63% of the 12 – 17 age group has been fully vaccinated in New York State.