



STILL HOPES

Episcopal Retirement Community

To: All Still Hopes Residents and Staff
From: Danny Sanford, Still Hopes' CEO
Subject: CMS Vaccine Mandate Injunction
Date: December 3, 2021

All Still Hopes Residents and Staff,

As you very likely know by now, CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) has suspended enforcement of its Vaccine Mandate Order, pending the outcome of the litigation filed against that mandate. This CMS Mandate Order is the one with the December 5th deadline for vaccination that you have probably heard a great deal about. CMS has filed motions for a stay of the Mandate, but while that works through the courts, they do not plan to enforce the December 5th deadline, which was a requirement within their original Mandate. There is no way to know whether the injunction issue will be settled in days, or weeks, or months, but until it is resolved, the Mandate is not being enforced by CMS.

At Still Hopes we have taken the position that it is the individual's right to choose whether to become vaccinated or not. Still Hopes chose to reward those who do get the vaccine, rather than to take punitive action against those who have a strong desire to not be vaccinated. This is possible due to the fact that our country has allowances in place for religious and medical exemptions, which are applicable for Orders such as the CMS Vaccine Mandate Order. If the CMS Mandate returns to full force and effect, it is still a fact that Still Hopes cannot continue the employment of any staff member who does not either become fully vaccinated or, does not acquire an approved exemption.

Still Hopes will stand with its current decision to allow each person to make that individual choice, but at the same time **strongly encourages staff to become vaccinated**, understanding this is the best way to help stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Still Hopes will continue to provide frequent testing, PPE (face masks, gloves, gowns, goggles, face shields), social distancing guidance, and requests for frequent hand-washing, all at no cost to our staff.

Still Hopes has offered a reward of \$500 to every staff member who becomes vaccinated, with a first dose of vaccine by December 5, 2021, and a pledge to get a second dose by January 4, 2022. The \$500 reward remains in place with the current deadlines of CMS's original Mandate Order. We now have a staff vaccination rate, including approved exemptions, of 93%, up from just about 60% prior to the announcement of the reward program.

We will keep you abreast of changes as they occur, and we continue to covet your prayers for Still Hopes, for our residents and staff, and for our country.

Blessings,

Danny