

COVID-19 VACCINE POLICY OF THE
MASSACHUSETTS COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM
FOR STUDENTS

INTRODUCTION

In order to provide and maintain a learning and working environment that safeguards the health and well-being of the college community, during 2021 all Massachusetts Community College members, including students, faculty and staff, have been strongly encouraged to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

With the number of new cases of COVID-19 across the Commonwealth in unvaccinated populations, the increased access and availability of vaccines in the Commonwealth, the Food & Drug Administration's full and pending approval of available vaccines, and consistent with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") that the COVID-19 vaccine has been proven to be extremely safe and highly effective, the Massachusetts Community College Presidents determined that COVID-19 vaccines should be required. Thus, in September 2021, the Presidents announced that by January 2022, all Massachusetts Community College members, including students, faculty, and staff must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and submit verification of their fully vaccinated status to the College absent an approved reasonable accommodation.

SCOPE

The student vaccination policy applies to all full and part-time students who access campus for any reason, including taking credit or non-credit course(s) taught by the College through its employees with some face-to-face component regardless of location of course (ex. clinical site). Students taking courses offered through off-site locations who will not access campus for any reason are only subject to the vaccine requirements of those off-site entities absent a separate agreement.

The student vaccination policy also applies to students who are required by program or activity to be vaccinated as a condition of participation (e.g. athletics, healthcare programs, clinical placements) even if they do not access campus.

The student vaccination policy does not apply to those students who are only taking online courses, whether full or part-time, credit or non-credit, and who will not access campus for any reason, including for instruction, advising, activities, clubs, and/or other purposes.

The student vaccination policy does not apply to employees who are covered under separate employee vaccination requirements; however, employees enrolled in a course at a community college must also follow the student vaccination policy and students who work at a community college (except for work study students) must also follow the employee vaccination policy.

This policy is intended to comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws and is based on applicable guidance from federal and state public health agencies.

COVID-19 VACCINE REQUIREMENT

Verification

Verification of full vaccination status is required for students, as defined above in Scope. This policy relies on the CDC's definition of full vaccination status which currently provides in its guidance that "[i]n general, people are considered fully vaccinated:

- 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or
- 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine."¹

This policy shall incorporate by reference any changes in the CDC's definition of full vaccination status, including but not limited to, booster shots.

Students shall provide written proof of an official record of full vaccination status to the College either through an electronic verification process which may include a designated email address, website link, and/or other electronic platform established by the College for such purpose or in person to the Dean of Student's Office (or other designated office). Students who attend more than one Community College shall provide full vaccination status verification to each separate College. Students shall comply with their College's instructions on how to submit verification of full vaccination status. All vaccine verification information shall be treated as confidential student record information.

Colleges may prioritize and/or limit registration for face-to-face/hybrid classes to fully vaccinated students.

Students who fail to submit verification of full vaccination status following the effective date of the student vaccination policy will not be permitted on campus, including to attend class, or to participate in College activities, for any reason, absent an approved reasonable accommodation, and, may be administratively withdrawn and/or transferred to an online class if available.

Violations of the student vaccination policy, including but not limited to fraudulent verification, or unauthorized campus access, may subject students to interim measures and/or discipline consistent with the College's Student Code of Conduct.

¹ This guidance applies to COVID-19 vaccines currently approved or authorized for emergency use by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna, and Johnson & Johnson [J&J]/Janssen COVID-19 vaccines) and some vaccines used for U.S. participants in COVID-19 vaccine trials (such as Novavax). This guidance can also be applied to COVID-19 vaccines that have been listed for emergency use by the World Health Organization (such as AstraZeneca/Oxford). More information is available at [Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines | CDC](#)

Request for Reasonable Accommodations

Students who are unable to submit verification of full vaccination status for any reason and seek a reasonable accommodation should direct their request to the Dean of Student's Office (or other designated office) through a designated email address, website link, and/or other electronic platform established by the College for this purpose or by submission of the documents to such office. Students who attend more than one Community College shall provide their request for reasonable accommodation to each College. Students must follow their College's instructions regarding reasonable accommodation requests, including submission of necessary documentation.

Requests for reasonable accommodation, including requests to be exempt from the vaccine requirement for religious or medical reasons, will be considered consistent with applicable laws, legal guidance, and the Board of Higher Education Policy on Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity and Diversity for the Massachusetts Community Colleges. The College will engage in an interactive process to determine if the Student is eligible for a reasonable accommodation, and if so, whether the requested accommodation is reasonable and does not create an undue hardship for the College and/or does not pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others in the learning and working environment, if applicable.

The individualized interactive process is estimated to take a minimum of ten (10) business days following the receipt of satisfactory documentation supporting the Student's eligibility for reasonable accommodation. Thus, Students seeking to have a reasonable accommodation approved in order to comply with this policy should submit their reasonable accommodation request and provide necessary documentation as soon as possible and without delay in order to allow adequate time for the individualized interactive process to occur in compliance with this policy. Following the effective date of this policy, students should not expect that they will be allowed to attend classes or be permitted on campus while a request for an accommodation is pending.

In the event a reasonable accommodation request is approved, Students may be subject to additional health and safety protocols and/or excluded from campus and/or college activities including but not limited to travel, for the protection of health or safety, as determined by the College in consideration of local, state, and/or or federal laws and public health guidance and/or mandates.