



COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement

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March 7 Face Covering Update

Beginning March 7, face coverings will become optional, indoors and outdoors on NYC public school grounds and on school buses, for all K-12 students and staff with a few exceptions. Please note that while wearing a face covering will no longer be required, anyone who chooses to wear a mask may continue to do so. For more information, please visit the updated [Face Coverings InfoHub](#) page.

Guidance for Operations on Monday, October 4, 2021

The [Guidance for Operations on Monday, October 4, 2021](#) [↗](#) includes information on what to do if a staff member who has not complied with the vaccine mandate, or is not exempt from it, comes to work on Monday, October 4.

The DOE emailed all noncompliant staff who do not have an approved or pending vaccine exemption this weekend, informing them that they will be removed from payroll starting Monday, October 4. Principals can find a [generic version of the notification of LWOP to noncompliant employees here](#) [↗](#). You should print copies of this letter and present to any noncompliant staff who show up to work on Monday without proof of vaccination.

Principals can use this [recommended letter template](#) [↗](#) to notify families who have an educator going on leave.

Related Links

[Illuminate Education](#)
[PSAL](#)
[School Health Policy](#)
[COVID-19 Testing](#)
[Situation Room](#)
[Field Trips](#)
[Instructional Expectations for Short-Term Remote Learning](#)
[Attendance](#)
[Face Coverings](#)
[Daily Routines in Early Childhood Classrooms](#)
[Use of DOE Space](#)
[COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement](#)
[School Signage](#)
[In-School Meal Service, Lunch Coverage Options, and Instructional Lunch](#)
[Academic Recovery-](#)


DOE-UFT MOA: Emergency Classroom Coverage by Non-Teaching Titles

DOE and UFT have finalized an [agreement on additional staffing flexibilities](#) that schools can use in the coming weeks on an if-needed basis, where possible, if other staffing strategies do not work. Please review the MOU, which includes parameters for schools to assign, if needed:

- Non-teacher titles (guidance counselors, social workers, psychologists, lab specialists and techs) to emergency coverages
- Centrally-funded IEP teacher to emergency coverages
- Occupational Therapists and Physical Therapists to provide supplemental supervision (aka acting as second or additional DOE employee in a classroom) on an emergency basis

Citywide Principal Meeting Recordings

Citywide Principal Meeting - September 30, 2021

Citywide Principal Meeting - September 27, 2021

Citywide Principal Meeting - September 24, 2021

Vaccine Requirements for Employees and Others Working/Volunteering in a DOE Building

As announced on August 23 by Mayor de Blasio, Chancellor Porter, and Health Commissioner Chokshi, all DOE employees are required to provide proof that they have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Employees must provide such proof by 11:59pm on October 1, 2021.

Employees who received only the first dose of a 2-dose vaccine as of October 1, 2021, must provide proof of receipt of the second dose within 45 days after receipt of the first dose to remain compliant, according to the order issued by the Commissioner of Health. Further, newly-hired staff must provide proof of vaccination (at least one dose), prior to their start date. All staff and new hires received an initial email on August 23 from Chancellor Porter, informing them of these requirements and how to provide vaccination information using the [Vaccination Portal](#).

Please see the [this Order from the Commissioner of Health and Mental Hygiene](#) for more information.

Please ensure that your staff and all new hires are aware of these requirements. Staff who have not provided proof of COVID-19 vaccination will receive regular communications, to remind them that their first dose must be completed by October 1.

Schools should see the [Guidance on Access and Use of Employee Vaccination Information](#) to learn more about access to reports in the [COVID-19 Vaccination Portal](#).

Additional individuals covered by this mandate include:

Instructional Guidance
Physical Education
Guidance for the Arts
Extension of Services for Students 21 and Older with IEPs
Transportation Guidance
Internet Connectivity Support Policy
Digital Learning Devices
Outdoor Learning
Supporting Students in Foster Care and Temporary Housing
Building Response Team
School-Based Health Centers
Reopening School Libraries Plan 2021-2022
End of Year Activities Guidance



- All DOE volunteers, interns, and student teachers in a DOE school or DOE building,
- City employees who work in-person in a DOE school, DOE building, or charter school
- DOE/City contractors who work in-person in a DOE school, DOE building, or charter school
- Employees of any charter school, and contractors of any charter school located in a DOE building who work in person in such building.

The above individuals must provide proof of at least their first shot of the COVID-19 vaccine by October 1. In addition, under a State Department of Health mandate, the above individuals must also be tested for COVID-19 at least once per week until they have submitted proof of full vaccination against COVID-19.

Testing Requirements

Any employees/contractors who work in a school building who are not fully vaccinated must submit a weekly negative COVID-19 PCR test until they are fully vaccinated. Staff are eligible for up to one hour of additional pay or leave (for staff with annual leave) to get tested outside of work hours [not release time]. Normal timekeeping procedures should be followed to track the up to one hour of per session for weekly testing.

- All staff can get [tested for free at City sites](#) .
- Staff must upload proof of the negative test result to the [DOE Vaccination Portal](#) .
- For questions, email stayinghealthy@schools.nyc.gov .

Vaccine Requirements for Visitors and Extracurricular Activities

All students and staff who are eligible to receive the vaccine and participate in high-risk sports must be vaccinated against COVID-19. Students in fall high-risk sports must get their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine by their first day of competitive play. Winter and spring participants have until the beginning of their season to be fully vaccinated. High risk sports are competitive sports are football, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, lacrosse, stunt, and rugby. Vaccination is also required for participation in bowling, because while not a high-risk sport, it takes place in spaces that require vaccination for children ages five and up.

A COVID-19 vaccination requirement also applies to students participating in high-risk afterschool extracurricular activities like chorus, musical theater, dance/dance team, band/orchestra (with concern for woodwinds), marching band, cheerleading/step teams/flag team. Students ages five and up must be vaccinated in order to participate in these extracurricular activities.

Students ages 5 through 11 who wish to continue to participate in these activities must get their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine by December 14.

Proof of Vaccination

All DOE employees must upload proof of vaccination through the [DOE Vaccination Portal](#) . Acceptable forms of proof include a photo of an individual's vaccination card, NYS Excelsior Pass, or another official record of vaccination.



The Division of Human Capital will be helping to enforce this mandate by sending regular communications to staff who have not provided proof of vaccination to remind them that their first dose must be completed by October 1. School staff must complete weekly testing requirements until they are fully vaccinated.

DHC will also be sharing more details shortly about how supervisors and eligible HR staff will be able to view information specific to their team and location by accessing reports in the DOE Vaccination portal.

Families can also upload proof of their student's vaccination status through the DOE Vaccination Portal.

Visitor Policy

Currently New York City is at a high level of COVID-19 transmission. During this time, schools should limit nonessential visitors coming into the building during the school day. Schools are encouraged, where possible, to address visitor and parent concerns by phone or computer. Principals and designated staff may conduct meetings remotely where possible.

In order to protect staff and students in DOE buildings, all visitors wishing to enter DOE school buildings must show proof of having at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccination. Children/infants who are not yet age-eligible for a COVID vaccine are permitted to enter a DOE building and are not required to show proof of vaccine. **Please note that visitors do not include students attending school or school-related activities in a DOE building, including adult students participating in D79, YABC, or DYCD programs.**

Acceptable proof of vaccination is one of the following:

- A [CDC Vaccination Card](#) ; a photo or photocopy is also acceptable.
- A [NYC Vaccination Record](#)  or other official immunization record from within or outside the US, including from a health care provider. A photo or photocopy of this card is also acceptable.
- NYC COVID Safe App on [Android](#)  or [iOS](#) .
- [Excelsior Pass or Excelsior Pass Plus](#) .
- [DOE COVID-19 Vaccine Portal](#) .

An acceptable COVID-19 vaccination includes one dose of any COVID-19 vaccine fully authorized or authorized for emergency use by the [FDA](#)  or [WHO](#) .

If a visitor wishes to enter a DOE building but is unable or unwilling to show proof of vaccination upon sign in, the visitor may not enter the building absent emergency circumstances. Additionally, any visitor to the building must show identification, complete the daily health screening.

Schools must make every effort to ensure unvaccinated individuals are able to still meet with teachers and attend meetings by offering virtual options. School Safety Agents should connect visitors with Parent Coordinator or other relevant staff members to assist.

Protocol for Visitors



Upon entry to a Department of Education building, a visitor must sign in and show photo identification, proof of vaccination, and completion of health screening form.

If the visitor is unable to comply with one of the four requirements above, the School Safety Agent will do the following:

Photo Identification

Remind the visitor of the types of identification accepted, including the IDNYC.

Guardians who do not have acceptable photo identification shall not be denied access to their student's school. Where acceptable photo identification cannot otherwise be made available and there is no other reason to deny access, the principal or designee (e.g., the parent coordinator), must be contacted. The principal/designee must then escort the parent to the office they are visiting and, following the meeting, escort the parent out of the building.

Proof of Vaccination

Remind the visitor of the types of vaccine records that are accepted.

Health Screening Clearance

Provide a paper copy of the health screening form.

In order to enter the building, a visitor must have proof of vaccination, completion of the daily, and a completed health screening form. If the visitor cannot comply with those requirements, the School Safety Agent should connect the visitor with Parent Coordinator or other relevant staff member to assist.

Exceptions to the Visitor Vaccine Mandate

On the first day of school, 3K/Pre-K guardians, in small groups, will be able to walk their students into the classroom and stay with them briefly without showing proof of vaccination.

Throughout the school year, the following exceptions to the visitor vaccine mandate apply:

- Any guardian needing to register their student for school may enter the building without showing proof of vaccination.
- Any individual dropping off a child at a LYFE Center.
- Any individual seeking to get vaccinated against COVID-19 at a DOE vaccine site.
- Delivery personnel may enter the building to place items in a designated area without showing proof of vaccination.
- Any individual voting at a school-based voting site.
- Should a student have a medical emergency or be in crisis, the student's guardian will be allowed to enter the building, regardless of vaccine status.
- Individuals responding to an emergency, including police, fire, emergency medical services personnel, and others who need to enter the building to respond to or pick up a student experiencing an emergency, do not need to show proof of vaccination to enter the school building.
- Any child or infant who is not yet age eligible for the COVID vaccine.



Unique Circumstances for Unvaccinated Staff

Staff that are unable to get vaccinated because of recent COVID-19 diagnosis:

- Anyone who cannot meet the deadline because of a current or recent COVID-19 diagnosis should apply for a medical exemption immediately in SOLAS. They can remain exempt and should not work in person while they are in the isolation period. Once the isolation period has ended, they should immediately be vaccinated.
- Anyone who is not vaccinated and who has received a monoclonal antibody infusion due to a positive COVID diagnosis should apply for a medical exemption immediately in SOLAS. During the 90-day period after monoclonal antibody treatment, the employee cannot be vaccinated but may continue to work in person.

Are staff members that have applied for an exemption from vaccination being re-assigned to another location? If so, how will they be informed about re-assignment? ▲

When the mandate goes into effect, staff who work in schools who have an exemption will be given another assignment outside of the school building. They will be notified at that time, as would the principal who may be consulted on appropriate work.

If a staff member is awaiting an appeal decision, are they allowed in the building? ▲

When the mandate goes into effect, if a staff member remains unvaccinated but has a pending appeal, then they likely will temporarily be given an alternate assignment.

More information will follow. Employees who have pending applications (not appeals) for exemptions may be put on unpaid leave.

Frequently Asked Questions

For technical support using the Vaccination Portal, please email VaxComplianceIT@schools.nyc.gov.

Where can schools monitor vaccination status of staff that report in their buildings but are not on their TO? ▲

- ATRs:** Reports with the compliance status of Excessed Supervisors (ATRs) have been shared with superintendents. All other employees in excess assigned to a school should appear on their TO in Galaxy and therefore their compliance status should appear in the Vaccination Portal.
- Related Services Providers:** Related service providers are subject to the same vaccination and screening protocols as other staff and visitors. While information about itinerant staff is available only to the school at which the provider is payrolled at this time, the DOE is working to minimize the impact of vaccination requirements on service to students and is considering a range of measures to address them where they occur. In the immediate term, schools may utilize per session and overtime funds that will be provided for this purpose to hire F-status or part time staff and request contracted support from BCOs to identify replacement



coverage when the vaccination policy is implemented. Supervisors will contact impacted schools next week to discuss plans to fill in gaps.

- c. **DYCD-CBO Providers:** CBOs are responsible for their own employees' compliance with the vaccine mandate. CBO staff entering your building must present proof of vaccination, consistent with the visitor policy.
- d. **Substitute:** SubCentral provides details about if subs are eligible to work. You can see this on the substitute profile page. All subcentral administrators can access. Contact your BCO HR Director for support.
- e. **Custodial:** Your school's Deputy Director of Facilities (DDF) will contact you directly if your Custodian Engineer (CE) is not compliant. If the CE is not in compliance that school will be placed under temporary care. The DDF will notify the principal of the name of the temporary care CE and will keep you updated if/when the custodian becomes compliant and can return to the building. If you do not hear from your DDF, you can assume your custodian is compliant. If you're informed that your custodian is not compliant, you should notify the SSA agents so that the employee is added to the non-compliant list. If you have any questions, please contact your DDF. NYCSSS employees (custodial workers) are supervised by the Custodial Engineers, and CEs can confirm vaccination status of NYCSSS employees. Principals should ask their CE for a NYCSSS employee status.
- f. **Kitchen:** The OFNS Manager is responsible for confirming all staff working at your school are compliant. For any questions regarding the vaccination status of kitchen workers, please contact your OFNS Manager.
- g. **Nurse:** The Office of School Health (OSH) is monitoring nurse compliance and will notify you if the nurse assigned to your site is not compliant and unable to enter the building. If you do not hear from your Borough Nursing Director, you can assume the nurse at your school is compliant. If your nurse is not compliant, please inform the SSA agents so that the employee is added to the "no entry permitted" list. If you have any questions, please contact your Borough Nursing Director.
- h. **SSA:** NYPD is monitoring compliance status of SSAs. Schools/principals are not responsible for monitoring this or following up with SSAs about their compliance. All non-compliant SSAs will receive written notification of their status and advised that they will come off of payroll. Supervisors of SSAs will be visiting schools to ensure that no unauthorized SSA is in a school building.

Are we anticipating a bus driver shortage due to the vaccine mandate? Are they considered DOE employees?

No, bus drivers are not DOE employees and must follow vendor protocols, which include weekly testing at bus yards.

Are charter school staff required to be vaccinated as well and how do we know who's vaccinated and who's not?

Yes. The employer (the charter school organization) is responsible for managing this directly. The DOE doesn't have access to charter school staff/human resources information. For cases of non-compliance, the DOHMH will directly provide oversight.

What about schools who are co-located with charter schools? We have multiple entrances for the different schools, and they do not use SSAs for their entry point. Will their safety staff also bar entry for unauthorized staff?



Charter schools manage the vaccination status of their employees directly. The charter school leadership will have to develop and implement a process for charter school staff that do not vaccinate. This will include escorting staff out of the building or barring entry.

When I log into the Vaccination Portal, I can only see my own status. As a supervisor, how do I obtain access to lists of my compliant and non-compliant staff? ▲

The privacy and security of employee information is a top priority; only select employees have access to view the vaccination status of others within the portal. Individuals with the following titles or roles will have access to monitor compliance/non-compliance:

- Principals – all employees staffed on their schools TO
- Superintendents – only the principal and APs at their specific schools
- Human Resources Directors (HRDs) – all employees staffed on TOs that they manage directly

If you were not automatically provisioned access and are in one of these roles, please email VaxComplianceIT@schools.nyc.gov with your request. Once approved by the Chief Administrative Office, access can be granted.

How can I search for all staff within a particular administrative district? ▲

This functionality will be available in a future release. Currently individuals with access may search by location code.

If my access level is incorrect or I cannot locate the record for a person on my team, whom can I contact? ▲

Central staff and HRDs may email VaxComplianceIT@schools.nyc.gov for technical and access-related issues. For all other requests, users may continue to submit to the helpdesk.

Which staff members will appear on the “compliant” tab? ▲

This tab will display all those individuals staffed on the location’s TO in Galaxy with at least one dose of the vaccination *except* for the following:

- Individuals added to the “People Not On Budget” (PNOB) section in Galaxy that are not employees of the DOE
- Vendors/Consultants/Service Providers who have been added to PETS but are not considered employees
- Student aides/co-op students

What should I do if I notice an individual is on the non-compliant tab, but they present me with proof of vaccination? ▲



All staff members who are vaccinated should submit proof immediately using the [Vaccination Portal](#) . Principals and HRDs also can upload proof of vaccination on behalf of an employee who is struggling to use the portal.

What should an employee do if they can't access their NYCDOE email to login to the portal?

Many new hires uploaded proof of vaccination before they were given an official employee ID. Individuals in this situation will likely show up on both the non-compliant and compliant lists for about 24 hours while their new employee ID is being assigned to them in the portal.

When this occurs, please check if the newly hired employee is showing on the compliant list. If they are, then no action is needed from you; they will fall off the non-compliant list automatically.

If an individual submitted and received a medical or religious vaccine exemption, how will they appear in the vaccination portal?

For a future enhancement to the Vaccination Portal, authorized users will be able list of those employees with an approved COVID-19 vaccine-related religious or medical exemption.

An individual was listed as compliant previously but has now dropped off the report. Why might this have occurred?

This might occur if the employee subsequently resigned or is no longer an active employee, or if the individual transferred to a new location in Galaxy. Please escalate any questions to VaxComplianceIT@schools.nyc.gov .

How is weekly COVID-19 testing compliance being monitored for unvaccinated staff and how can principals access this information? Should staff submit test results on Mondays, or any time during the week? If an unvaccinated staff member does not submit proof of a negative COVID-19 test on a weekly basis, what next steps should the principal take?

Any employees/contractors who have not provided proof that they have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine in the interim period must submit a weekly negative COVID-19 PCR test (rapid or non-rapid) test by the end of each week until the vaccine mandate goes into effect. Principals can find proof of negative COVID-19 PCR diagnostic test (rapid or non-rapid) results of unvaccinated staff on the [COVID-19 Vaccination Portal](#).  The DOE is following up directly with all staff who have not submitted their weekly negative test result. Schools do not need to take action.

Is there a mechanism for principals to see vaccination status for per session employees whose payroll location may be a different school?



Not at this time, as the Vaccination Portal provides principals access to see the employees who are staffed at their specific TO location in Galaxy. If a principal needs the vaccination status of other employees who work per session or other activities at the school, they should reach out to their BCO HR Director who can assist with confirming this information, as needed.

If an unvaccinated employee is placed on leave without pay due to their compliance status, and then gets vaccinated, when can they return to work? What's the process for reinstatement? ▲

For the week of October 4th, an employee can return to work immediately after uploading proof of vaccination (at least one dose) and attesting they intend to return to work. If the employee received the first dose of a two-dose series, they are still expected to upload their vaccination status when they become fully vaccinated.

Principals and supervisors will be able to see newly compliant staff in the vaccine portal and receive regular reports of their employees who have uploaded proof of vaccination and attested that they intend to return to work in the Vaccination Portal.

There is no action for school or field staff to take to remove or reinstate employees from payroll due to their vaccination compliance status. All these transactions will be Centrally managed.

My staff says they just uploaded their proof of vaccination, but I still see their name on my non-compliant staff list. What do I do? ▲

It can take a couple of hours for employees to drop off the non-compliant list after they upload proof of vaccination, but they should appear on the compliant tab right away (within a few minutes). This means that for a few hours after submitting proof of vaccination, staff might appear on both lists, but will eventually drop off the non-compliant list. This is expected behavior and will resolve on its own.

If principals see someone on non-compliant list who has submitted proof of vaccination in the Portal, they should check if they are also on the compliant list. If they are, there is no issue and they will fall off the non-compliant list shortly. If they are not on the compliant list but are expected to, please contact VaxComplianceIT@schools.nyc.gov.

What do we do about staff on the Vaccination Portal listed as non-compliant who are on leave or have resigned? ▲

No action is needed at this time. In the coming week, the Portal will display employees who are on an approved leave, accommodation, or exemption in a different section of the portal. Employees who have resigned or are retiree should fall off the report once the transaction is finalized. Additional information will be shared shortly and please email vaxcomplianceIT@schools.nyc.gov with any questions.

How do we know the vaccination status of substitutes? ▲

Subs also need to upload proof of first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine in the DOE COVID-19 Vaccination Portal , and their eligibility to work will be visible in SubCentral.



How long does it take between an exemption decision (from HR or arbitrator) and action? ▲

We are processing exemption and accommodation requests on an ongoing basis. The vast majority have received a determination already. Principals have also been notified of any staff granted exemptions and if/as they are awarded by the arbitrator a new notice will be sent. Those individuals will also appear on the Vaccination Portal with an indication if the employee is exempt.

Are employees who have an accommodation exempt from taking the vaccination? ▲

Accommodations are not exemptions. Accommodations are granted to employees who have been vaccinated but are unable to mount an immune response to COVID due to another condition or treatment. These employees will be given an alternate assignment and may work remotely in the interim. Principals with employees with approved accommodations have been notified and will be updated if/as additional accommodations are approved.



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