



THE MARYLAND SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

Vaccine and Immunization Policy

#2205

Purpose

In accordance with The Maryland School for the Blind's duty to provide and maintain a school and workplace that is free of known hazards, we are adopting this policy to safeguard the health of our students, employees and their families; our volunteers and visitors; and the community at large from infectious diseases, such as COVID-19, that may be reduced by vaccinations. This policy will comply with all applicable laws and is based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and local health authorities, as applicable.

Scope

This Policy applies to all Maryland School for the Blind employees, contract staff, temps, volunteers, and Board Members.

Procedures

Employees will be notified by the Human Resources department as to the type of vaccination(s) covered by this policy and the timeframe(s) for having the vaccine(s) administered.

The Maryland School for the Blind will pay for all vaccinations received on campus; COVID-19 vaccinations are free, whether an individual has health insurance or not. When not received in-house, vaccinations should be run through your health insurance and be submitted for reimbursement where applicable.

Required vaccine(s) may be added as future guidelines are established through federal, state, or local public health agencies, MSDE, etc.

COVID19 Vaccine:

Consistent with the CDC's guidance, as well as that of other Maryland public health agencies, to prevent the infection and spread of the COVID-19 virus and as an integral measure towards the general public's health and safety, The Maryland School for the Blind is, as of the date of October 18, 2021 (the "Effective Date"), implementing the following practices:

- All employees, contract staff, temporary employees, volunteers, and Board Members are required to be fully vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccination by December 17, 2021 or their employment start date (if after December 17, 2021), unless otherwise exempted from this Policy by an approved reasonable accommodation decided pursuant to the interactive process as provided below. Fully and properly vaccinated individuals under this Policy include all individuals who have received and are past 14 days from last dose:
 1. Two (2) doses in a 2-dose vaccine series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines; or
 2. One (1) dose in a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine.

If an employee does not meet these requirements, that employee is **NOT** fully vaccinated in accordance with this Policy.

Employees will be required to provide either proof of vaccination or an approved reasonable accommodation to be exempted from these requirements.

Employees not in compliance with this policy will be placed on unpaid leave until their employment status is further determined.

COVID-19 vaccination records and testing records will be kept confidential and maintained separately from an employee's personnel file.

THE MARYLAND SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

All employees, regardless of vaccination status, are required to follow the MSB "Return to School Plan" as periodically updated and posted on the MSB website including any required mitigation strategies such as PPE and masking, social distancing, and cleaning requirements.

Reasonable Accommodation

Employees in need of an exemption from this policy due to a medical reason, or because of a sincerely held religious belief must submit a completed Request for Accommodation form to the Human Resources department to begin the interactive process to assess the accommodation request as soon as possible after vaccination deadlines have been announced. Accommodations will be granted if they are reasonable and they do not cause The Maryland School for the Blind undue hardship or pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others. In cases where an accommodation request is granted for vaccine exemption, weekly COVID19 testing will be required. If an employee does not complete the on-campus weekly testing requirement, they will need to submit test results, at their own expense, from a private testing site (i.e. pharmacy, urgent care clinic, etc.)

If an employee does not complete the on-campus weekly testing requirement 2 times, they will be subject to progressive discipline. If an employee refuses weekly testing, they will be terminated from employment.

Please note that the Employer's receipt of an accommodation request does not automatically excuse an employee from the requirements of this Policy. Rather, consistent with federal and state law, the Employer will consider accommodation requests on an individualized, case-by-case basis and will engage in further dialogue with an employee, and any physicians, medical providers, and/or religious personnel as permitted under law, upon receipt of any accommodation form.

Please direct any questions regarding this policy to the Human Resources department.

Notification, Training, and Posting: To ensure compliance with this policy and consistent application of procedures, the Superintendent's direct reports shall provide initial notice of this policy to employees. The Human Resources department shall post this policy on the MSB intranet. The Vaccine and Immunization Policy will be summarized in the MSB employee handbook.