



Massachusetts Community Colleges COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Updated as of October 18, 2021

Are COVID-19 vaccines required at the community colleges?

Effective January 2022, Massachusetts Community College 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. *The Colleges will be providing information to employees about the verification process following impact bargaining with applicable unions. If they have not already done so, the colleges will be providing information to students as to how to submit verification in the upcoming weeks.*

Why are vaccines being required at the community colleges?

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 at preventing infection, severe disease, hospitalization, and death, the Massachusetts Community College Presidents determined that COVID-19 vaccines should be required.

What are the vaccine requirements for students?

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, such as instruction, advising, and/or other purposes are not required to be vaccinated against COVID-19. All other students whether full or part-time, credit or non-credit, are required to be fully vaccinated, including:

- Students with any on-campus component to their schedule;
- Students who seek to access any on-campus services; and
- Students who are required by program or activity to be vaccinated as a condition of participation (e.g. athletics, clinical placements).

What is the definition of fully vaccinated?

The community colleges use the CDC's definition of full vaccination status, which currently provides 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."

Any changes in the CDC's definition of full vaccination status, including but not limited to booster shots, will be incorporated by reference into the community colleges' requirement.

Where can vaccines be obtained?

Many of the community colleges are hosting vaccine clinics on their campuses so check their websites for dates and times. Additional resources for accessing a COVID-19 vaccine include:

[Vaxfinder](#)
[COVID-19 Mobile Vaccine Program](#)
[Additional Vaccine Resources](#)

What alternatives are available to students who are unable to be fully vaccinated?

Students who are unable to be fully vaccinated may take online courses and utilize services remotely. Students may also request a reasonable accommodation and the College will engage in an interactive process consistent with applicable laws and college policy to determine if eligible for a reasonable accommodation, and if so, whether the requested accommodation is reasonable and does not create an undue burden or direct threat to health or safety. In the event a reasonable accommodation is approved, Students may be subject to additional health and safety protocols and/or be 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.

The colleges will be communicating the process for requesting a reasonable accommodation related to the COVID-19 vaccination requirement in the coming weeks.

Is the vaccine required for those who have already recovered from COVID-19?

Yes. According to the CDC, full vaccination is recommended for those who have had COVID-19 because research has not yet shown how long COVID-19 protects those from getting COVID-19 again and vaccination helps protect those who have already had COVID-19.