




Policy Name:	COVID-19 Vaccination and Mask Policy		
Associated Form(s):	Vaccination and Exemption Forms: 1. Student Form 2. Employees Mav Health and Wellness Portal .	Policy Number:	2023-6
Reviewed:	1. COVID Task Force 2. Non-Academic Policy Review Committee	Approved:	April 19, 2023
Approval Authority:	President 	Adopted:	April 19, 2023
Responsible Executive(s):	1. Vice President of Student Affairs 2. Vice President of Finance	Revised:	June 2021, September 2021, October 2021, January 2022, April 2022, August 2022, September 2022, February 2023
Responsible Office(s):	1. Office of Student Affairs 2. Office of ACCESSibility 3. Student Health Office 4. Office of Human Resources	Contact(s):	1. Associate Dean of Student Affairs 2. Director of ACCESSibility 3. Director of Health and Wellness 4. Associate Director of Human Resources

I. Vaccine and Booster Policy

COVID-19 continues to be a dangerous respiratory disease. Nevertheless, based on the U.S Department of Health and Human Services decision to end the COVID-19 federal health emergency on May 11, 2023, Mercy University is no longer requiring proof of the COVID-19 vaccine or booster effective May 11, 2023, except in the following circumstances:

- All students in clinical programs in the School of Health and Natural Sciences and the School of Nursing are required to show proof of the recommended COVID-19 vaccine and booster, as per the [CDC Guidelines](#).
- All faculty and staff whose job functions relate to work in clinical settings in the School of Health and Natural Sciences and School of Nursing are required to show proof of the recommended COVID-19 vaccine and booster, as per the [CDC Guidelines](#).
- Students in other experiential programs may be required to show proof of the COVID-19 vaccine and/or booster by the external site.

Contractors, vendors and visitors, including those who regularly come to Mercy campuses, are also no longer required to show proof of the COVID-19 vaccine or booster.

Nonetheless, the University strongly urges all community members to remain up-to-date with the COVID-19 vaccines and boosters. Please see CDC Guidelines for vaccine [eligibility](#).

The University reserves the right to make any changes to this Policy as it deems necessary to ensure the health and safety of the University community.

II. Vaccine and Booster Exemptions

Those students and employees who are still required to provide proof of the COVID-19 vaccine and booster have the right to seek an exemption to the COVID-19 vaccine under the following circumstances:

- 1) Due to an allergy or medical contraindication to receiving the vaccine. They must provide the exemption form and physician's statement (see below); or
- 2) Due to a sincerely held spiritual or religious belief, practice, or observance. They must provide a statement.

Note, however, that while the University may grant an exemption, the off-campus clinical site may not provide such exemption. The University will not be responsible for finding a clinical site that will accept an employee or student who is not vaccinated and boosted.

III. Face Masks

Currently, masks are not required in Mercy University facilities **except in the following circumstances:**

- Faculty, staff and students in certain programs, such as in the health sciences and nursing, shall be required to wear masks at the discretion of the program and faculty where health and safety dictates, or may be required at an off-campus facility.
- Anyone who is required pursuant to current guidelines relating to those who tested positive for, or have been exposed to, COVID-19 must wear a mask pursuant to those guidelines.
- Please refer to [CDC guidelines](#) regarding masking for more information.

IV. Non-Retaliation and Respect for Community Members

Section 11(c) of the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 protects employees from retaliation in the workplace, particularly as it pertains to complaints that may arise regarding the health and safety of the environment. Confidential complaints can be made at any time pursuant to the University's *Whistleblower Policy*.

In addition, given the severity of COVID-19 and the continued uncertainty surrounding the pandemic, all members of the Mercy University community shall respect any and all individuals who wear a mask, regardless of whether they may or may not be vaccinated.

V. COVID-19 Vaccination Status Privacy Notice

Mercy University is committed to protecting your personal information and being transparent about what information is held and how it is used. We understand your concerns about privacy and assure you that we take privacy matters seriously. Please see *Mercy's COVID-19 Privacy Policy Statement* in which the University explains how your personally identifiable information is collected and used as it relates to proof of the COVID-19 vaccine. The information you provide will be used only as outlined in that Policy Statement. If you have questions regarding this Privacy Notice, you may direct them to kbowes@mercy.edu.