



Title: MANDATORY COVID-19 VACCINATION POLICY		
Subject: HUMAN RESOURCES & LEGAL AFFAIRS	Page: 1 of 4	Policy Number: 06.90.00
Category: DISTRICTWIDE POLICY	Approval Date: 08/27/2021	Last Revised Date:

POLICY STATEMENT:

In accordance with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County’s (the “District”) duty to provide and maintain a workplace that is free of known hazards, the District has adopted this mandatory SARS-CoV-2 (“COVID-19”) vaccination policy to safeguard the health of District employees. Public health authorities have determined that unvaccinated individuals are more likely to contract, transmit and experience more severe symptoms of COVID-19 than individuals who are vaccinated. Those who are vaccinated are less likely to contract and transmit COVID-19.

This policy complies with applicable state and federal laws and is based on relevant public health guidance.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 and to mitigate the impact of the disease by increasing the percentage of vaccinated employees in the workplace.

This policy is intended to be interpreted consistent with and subject to applicable law. It supersedes all previous policies and/or memoranda that may have been issued from time to time on subjects covered in this policy. This policy is not intended to supersede or limit the District from enforcing programs or provisions in any applicable collective bargaining agreement.

If any section or provision of this document should be held invalid by operation of law, none of the remainder shall be affected.

AFFECTED AREAS:

This policy applies to all District employees, including, without limitation, interns and seasonal/temporary employees. This policy shall also apply to the District’s consultants, contract personnel, independent contractors, and personnel who: **(1)** are employed by temporary agencies and any other persons or firms doing business for or with the District; and **(2)** work within District buildings or outdoors on District premises with limited social distancing. Finally, this policy shall also apply to individual volunteers, as well as representatives/volunteers from the District’s partner organizations, who volunteer or work within District buildings or outdoors on District premises with limited social distancing.

DEFINITIONS:

For the purposes of this policy, the following terms shall be given the following meanings as set forth below:

Fully Vaccinated: Two weeks after the second dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine or two weeks after one dose of a single-dose vaccine.

PCR Test: A polymerase chain reaction (“PCR”) test detects genetic material from a specific organism, such as a virus. The test detects the presence of a virus if a person is infected at the time of the test.

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PROCEDURE/PROCESS:

1) All District employees must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Active employees as of the effective date of this policy must be fully vaccinated by October 15, 2021. New employees who start after the effective date of this policy must be either fully vaccinated or submit a request for reasonable accommodation prior to onboarding. Those whose requests for reasonable accommodation are granted must submit to PCR based tests twice weekly. Employees who are in inactive status will be required to be fully vaccinated or request a reasonable accommodation within eight weeks of returning to active status.

The District’s vaccine mandate is critical for the health of employees and a requirement to maintain safe in-person operations. Employees may request exemptions from the requirement for medical or religious reasons. Anyone requesting an exemption must access, complete, and submit a medical or religious accommodation request form to the Department of Human Resources to allow for evaluation and determination prior to October 15, 2021.

Non-employees covered by this policy (e.g., volunteers and contractors) shall receive information on policy compliance from Volunteer Resources or the applicable District department.

2) **Employee Attestation and Proof of Vaccination:**

Employees must attest to their vaccination status by October 15, 2021 and may be required to provide proof of vaccination to the Department of Human Resources by submitting their CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record Cards upon request.

An employee, who is no longer in possession of a CDC COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card, may utilize the Illinois Resident Immunization Portal for proof of vaccination, or submit documentation from the vaccination provider. The documentation should include the following information:

- Full Name;
- Date of Birth;
- Vaccine Manufacturer (i.e., Pfizer, Moderna, Johnson & Johnson, etc.);
- Lot Number;
- Date of Vaccination; and
- Site Location or Signature of Vaccine Administrator.

3) **Reasonable Accommodation:**

Requests for reasonable accommodations due to medical or sincerely held religious beliefs will be accepted and evaluated consistent with the Reasonable Accommodations Policy, the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”), as amended, 42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq. and Religious Accommodation Policy, and Title VII (42 U.S.C. Section 2000e et. seq). Employees must contact the District’s Human Resources Department office at fpd.humanresources@cookcountyl.gov to request an application.

The District’s Human Resources Department, Legal Department, and the employee’s Department Head will engage in an interactive dialogue to determine whether an accommodation is appropriate and can be granted without imposing an undue hardship. Accommodations may vary based upon the particular circumstances, such as job location, job duties, and shift, but will minimally include submitting to a PCR COVID-19 test twice per work week and enhanced PPE protocols.

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4) Penalties:

Failure to follow the provisions of this policy may subject an employee to discipline, up to and including termination of employment in accordance with the Personnel Rules and/or applicable CBA.

Consequences due to failure to comply by non-employees of the District (e.g., volunteers, partners, contractors) will be determined by the applicable District department, in consultation with the Legal Department.

5) Policy Modification:

Public health guidance, restrictions and industry best practices regarding COVID-19 and related vaccines are changing rapidly as new information becomes available, further research is conducted, and additional vaccines are approved. The District reserves the right to modify this policy at any time in its sole discretion to adapt to changing circumstances and business needs, consistent with its commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy workplace.

Should guidance be updated to require additional vaccinations, boosters, or treatments, the deadline for obtaining such vaccinations, boosters, or treatments shall be communicated to employees at least thirty (30) days prior to the compliance deadline. Failure to obtain required additional vaccinations, boosters, or treatments shall be considered a violation of this policy and subject employees to discipline action up to and including termination.

6) Confidentiality:

Documentation or other confirmation of vaccination is considered confidential medical information. All information received in connection with the mandatory vaccination process will be treated confidentially and only disclosed to the extent required by applicable law. Records pertaining to an employee’s vaccination status shall be maintained separately from the employee’s personnel files.

7) Policy on Non-Discrimination: The District prohibits the discriminatory application, implementation, or enforcement of any provision of this policy on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion, disability, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital status, parental status, military discharge status, source of income, gender identity, housing status, or any other protected category established by law, statute, or ordinance.

RESPONSIBILITY:

1) All District employees, consultants, contract personnel, independent contractors, individual volunteers, as well as representatives/volunteers from the District’s partner organizations, who volunteer or work within District buildings or outdoors on District premises with limited social distancing, are to comply with this policy.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS:

N/A

COMMUNICATION PLAN:

1) This policy should be distributed to all District staff, stewards, community service workers, and other individuals identified by the District.

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2) This policy should be added to the District shared drive, intranet, and website.

REFERENCES:

Cook County
[Executive Order 2021-1](#)
[Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Policy](#)
[Personnel Rules](#)

The Forest Preserve District of Cook County
[Employment Plan](#)
[Executive Order 2021-2](#)

POLICY LEAD: Michelle Gage
 Director of Human Resources

APPROVAL: Arnold Randall
 General Superintendent

POLICY HISTORY:

Approved: 08/27/2021
Revised: **Revised:**

If you have questions concerning this District policy, please contact:

Forest Preserve District of Cook County
 The Human Resources Department
 Phone: (708) 771-1562
 Email: FPD.HumanResources@cookcountyil.gov