



## FAQ – Vaccination Requirement Contents

Why has the CT state governor instituted these guidelines for school employees?..... 1

Who has additional information regarding COVID-19 and vaccinations? ..... 2

Where can vaccination records be found? ..... 2

What qualifies as fully vaccinated"? ..... 2

What medical conditions qualify for a medical exemption? ..... 3

What are the requirements for a religious exemption and who can sign off on the religious exemption? ..... 3

What happens if false documentation is utilized?..... 3

Who are “covered workers” who need to submit vaccination documentation?..... 3

What are the requirements for school based employers following September 27? ..... 3

What are the requirements for employees who do not supply documentation or have a confirmed, approved documented exemption following September 27? ..... 4

Are parents subject to any part of the Order? ..... 4

What should happen if a covered worker is diagnosed with COVID-19 before being fully vaccinated? ..... 5

Does the Order provide for any testing alternative to the vaccination requirement? ..... 5

Do covered workers with medical or religious exemptions need to submit to weekly testing? ..... 5

Why is LEARN requiring all employees to document their vaccination status? ..... 5

What application is being utilized by LEARN to automate the COVID-19 document verification? ..... 6

What information does the State of Connecticut require LEARN to collect?..... 6

## Why has the CT state governor instituted these guidelines for school employees?

Due to the facts that:

- COVID-19 is a respiratory disease that spreads easily from person to person and may result in serious illness or death; and
- the World Health Organization has declared the COVID-19 outbreak a pandemic; and
- the Delta variant of COVID-19 is highly contagious and spreads more easily and quickly than other COVID-19 variants; and
- according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH), the number of COVID-19 cases associated with the Delta variant and the overall rate of infection and hospitalization has increased significantly in Connecticut, such that the CDC considers transmission to be high in multiple Connecticut counties; and
- COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective, were evaluated in clinical trials involving tens of thousands of participants and met the U.S. Food & Drug Administration’s rigorous scientific standards for safety, effectiveness, and manufacturing quality needed to support emergency use authorization; and
- on July 6, 2021, the Office of Legal Counsel of the United States Department of Justice issued a legal opinion stating that federal and state governments were not prohibited by federal law from imposing vaccination



mandates, even when the only vaccines available are those authorized under U.S. Food and Drug Administration Emergency Use Authorizations; and

- vaccination is the most effective means of preventing infection, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19 and of limiting transmission and outbreaks of the disease, and is therefore a critical tool to respond to and slow the ongoing pandemic; and
- vaccines are widely available in Connecticut; and
- on August 14, 2021, the number of children hospitalized in the United States with COVID-19 hit a record high of more than 1,900 cases; and
- safe, full, in-person learning for students in Connecticut is a priority, especially following studies that show students benefit from in-person learning in schools; and WHEREAS, mandating vaccination helps schools safely return to in-person learning as well as extracurricular and sports activities that enrich students' emotional and social well-being; and
- the significant percentage of unvaccinated staff in schools increases the risk of COVID-19 transmission and places this vulnerable population at increased risk of severe symptoms, hospitalization, and death; and
- such risks are heightened greatly for children who may not be able to receive the vaccine because of their age; and for people whose medical conditions reduce their immune response; and
- increasing the percentage of vaccinated persons, particularly those in school workers will better protect co-workers and students and reduce the likelihood of spread of the infection as well as in-person learning; and
- it is the duty of every employer to protect the health and safety of employees by establishing and maintaining a healthy and safe work environment and by requiring all employees to comply with health and safety measures.

## Who has additional information regarding COVID-19 and vaccinations?

LEARN's local health district, Ledge Light Health District (LLHD), is a helpful resource for health and safety guidance and latest information about COVID testing and vaccinations. LLHD testing and vaccination sites throughout New London county can be found on their website at [www.llhd.org](http://www.llhd.org) or through their social media platforms ([Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#)).

## Where can vaccination records be found?

- Contact your vaccination provider to request a copy, or log into the patient portal to view or download your certificate of COVID-19 vaccination.
- If you have an account, [log into VAMS](#) and View or [Download your Certificate of COVID-19 Vaccination](#).
- Get your official immunization record through the [CT WiZ Public Portal](#). For more information on how to use this secure portal, visit [CONNECTICUT IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM](#).
- Call **(860) 509-7929** to request your official immunization record from the [CT Immunization Information System](#) (CT WiZ) at the Department of Public Health (vaccination providers are required to report COVID-19 vaccinations to CT WiZ)

## What qualifies as fully vaccinated"?

Under the Order, "fully vaccinated" means at least 14 days have elapsed since a person has received the final dose of a vaccine approved for use against COVID-19 by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, or as otherwise defined by the Centers for Disease Control."



## What medical conditions qualify for a medical exemption?

An individual may present a medical exemption based on a determination by the individual's physician, physician's assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse that the administration of a COVID-19 vaccine is likely to be detrimental to the individual's health. It is up to the individual's physician, physician's assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse to determine which medical conditions qualify for a medical exemption. LEARN's COVID Resources website has a form for each individual claiming a medical exemption to be signed by the individual's physician, physician assistant or advanced practice registered nurse.

## What are the requirements for a religious exemption and who can sign off on the religious exemption?

Each individual claiming a religious exemption must sign a statement attesting that vaccination is contrary to their sincerely held religious beliefs. LEARN's COVID Resources website has a form for each individual claiming a religious exemption to be used to document this exemption.

## What happens if false documentation is utilized?

It is a crime under federal law to use, buy, sell, or transfer a CDC vaccination card knowing that it's fraudulent. A violation of this federal law is punishable by a fine or imprisonment of up to five years.

18 USC. SEC 1017;

## Who are "covered workers" who need to submit vaccination documentation?

"Covered Worker" refers to all employees, both full and part-time, contractors, providers, assistants, substitutes, and other individuals working in a public or non-public pre-K to grade 12 school, including individuals providing operational or custodial services or administrative support or any person whose job duties require them to make regular or frequent visits to any such schools. Covered Worker does not include a contractor or employee of an outside vendor who visits a public or non-public pre-K through grade 12 school or Child Care Facility only to provide one-time or limited-duration repairs, services, or construction, or a volunteer. LEARN has made a determination that all employees are "covered workers."

## What are the requirements for school based employers following September 27?

On or before September 27, 2021, school boards and child care facilities shall, prior to extending an offer of employment to, or entering into a contract for the in-person services of, a covered worker or an entity that employs a covered worker, require that any covered worker (1) is fully vaccinated against COVID-19, (2) has received the first dose and has either received a second dose or has an appointment for the second dose in a two-dose series vaccination, such as Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or has received a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine, (3) is exempt from this requirement because a physician, physician's assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse determined that the administration of COVID-19 vaccine is likely to be detrimental to the covered worker's health, or the covered worker objects to vaccination on the basis of a sincerely held religious or spiritual belief, and the covered worker is able to perform their essential job functions with a

reasonable accommodation that is not an undue burden on the school board or child care facility; provided that any school board or childcare facility employee claiming such exemption shall apply for an exemption due to medical conditions or sincerely held religious or spiritual beliefs. Each request for an exemption will be considered on an individualized, case by case basis. Employees who have applied for an exemption must provide appropriate supporting documentation upon request; and

ii. After September 27, 2021, a school board or childcare facility shall not employ, or maintain a contract for the provision of in-person services of, any covered worker or an entity that employs a covered worker, unless such covered worker (1) is fully vaccinated against COVID-19, (2) has received the first dose and has either received a second dose or has an appointment for the second dose in a two-dose series vaccination, such as Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or has received a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine, or (3) is exempt from this requirement because a physician, physician's assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse determined that the administration of COVID-19 vaccine is likely to be detrimental to the covered worker's health, or the individual objects to vaccination on the basis of a sincerely held religious or spiritual belief, and the covered worker is able to perform their essential job functions with a reasonable accommodation that is not an undue burden on the school board or child care facility; provided that any school board or childcare facility employee claiming such exemption shall apply for an exemption due to medical conditions or sincerely held religious or spiritual beliefs. Each request for an exemption will be considered on an individualized, case by case basis. Employees who have applied for an exemption must provide appropriate supporting documentation upon request; and

iii. After September 27, 2021, no school board or child care facility shall employ, or contract for the provision of services from, any covered worker or entity that employs a covered worker subject to subsection (b)(i) or (b)(ii) of this section and is not exempt who has received the first dose of a two-dose series vaccination but fails to receive the second dose on the appropriate date as recommended by CDC or at the scheduled appointment without good cause.

## What are the requirements for employees who do not supply documentation or have a confirmed, approved documented exemption following September 27?

Covered workers who have not demonstrated proof of full vaccination will submit to COVID-19 testing one time per week on an ongoing basis until fully vaccinated and to provide adequate proof of the test results on a weekly basis to LEARN. This requirement shall take effect on September 27, 2021.

## Are parents subject to any part of the Order?

No, parents are not individuals subject to any part of the Order, unless they also work in schools and are therefore considered covered workers.

## What should happen if a covered worker is diagnosed with COVID-19 before being fully vaccinated?

The CDC currently recommends that individuals who are diagnosed with COVID-19 wait to be vaccinated until after they have recovered from the acute illness (if the individual had symptoms) and have met criteria to discontinue isolation. Covered workers whose full vaccination is delayed by a COVID-19 diagnosis should be granted a temporary medical exemption if they meet the criteria discussed below (See Question and Answer No. 10).

## Does the Order provide for any testing alternative to the vaccination requirement?

Yes. Starting on September 27, 2021, covered workers who do not demonstrate proof of full vaccination must submit to weekly COVID-19 testing on an ongoing basis until fully vaccinated, and must provide adequate proof of the test results to the school board on a weekly basis. The Order does not explicitly require school boards to provide for such testing to covered workers. The weekly testing option applies to covered workers with medical or religious exemptions, covered workers who have received only the first dose of a two-dose vaccine or for whom the required time period has not elapsed to be considered fully vaccinated, and covered workers who refuse to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. In other words, covered workers need not have a medical or religious exemption in order to avail themselves of the weekly testing option. If, however, a covered worker refuses to receive weekly testing, that worker shall not be allowed on school premises. Any further consequences for a covered worker's refusal to receive weekly testing are to be determined by the school board, to the extent permissible by law and any collective bargaining agreements, etc.

## Do covered workers with medical or religious exemptions need to submit to weekly testing?

Yes, the Order directs school boards to implement a policy requiring covered workers who have not demonstrated proof of full vaccination to submit to weekly COVID-19 testing. Since covered workers with medical or religious exemptions will not be fully vaccinated, they must submit to weekly testing.

## Why is LEARN requiring all employees to document their vaccination status?

LEARN's requirement to require a vaccination or document lack of vaccination comes from the state directive Connecticut Executive Order No. 13D, not a separate LEARN policy. After September 27, the Connecticut State Government is requiring us to enforce Executive Order No. 13D:

- Any state hospital employee, state employee, or covered worker who fails to comply with this order shall not be allowed on the premises of a state agency, school board, or child care facility until the individual provides adequate proof of compliance or without prior written authorization of the employer.
- Any school board or child care facility shall be in violation of this order when it permits a covered worker who has not complied with this order to be in a public or private pre-K through grade 12 school or a child care facility. A school board or child care facility also commits a violation if it fails to maintain documentation of vaccination, testing, or allowable exemptions as required by this order.

## What application is being utilized by LEARN to automate the COVID-19 document verification?

The application being used by LEARN to automate the COVID-19 document verification has the same level of protection as our other human resources systems (MUNIS, Timeclock, etc.) Only the Director, Human Resources (Christine Pemberton) and the Human Resources Generalist (responsible for tracking and reporting)(Beth Frechette) have direct access to the data and reporting, with Andy Benitez (IT) providing technical support. All parties have been briefed on privacy laws that pertain to COVID-19 information.

## What information does the State of Connecticut require LEARN to collect?

The information is required by the State of Connecticut which requires LEARN to:

- “Authenticate the vaccination status of all individuals subject to this order, maintain documentation of the vaccination or exemption of such individuals and report compliance with this order, in a form and manner directed by the Department of Public Health without adoption of such requirements by regulation in accordance with Chapter 54 of the Connecticut General Statutes.”
- Track the regular completion of “COVID-19 testing one time per week on an ongoing basis until fully vaccinated and to provide adequate proof of the test results on a weekly basis to the school board or child care facility. This requirement shall take effect on September 27, 2021” for those employees who are not “fully vaccinated.”