

Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccines for Student Athletes | FAQ's

For the remainder of the 2021-2022 academic year, the District is requiring all student athletes to be fully vaccinated with the COVID-19 vaccine in order to participate in interscholastic sports. Below please find a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) as a reference.

Why are vaccines being required for district student athletes participating in interscholastic sports?

Positive COVID-19 cases in athletes participating in District interscholastic sports programs result in large numbers of students paused from athletic participation and, more importantly, classroom instruction. The decision to require all student athletes participating in interscholastic sports to be vaccinated was made with the health and safety of our district at the forefront and in consideration of the unique student interactions sports entails, including close and regular contact during practices and competitions, group travel, and interactions with students from other institutions in high touch, competitive environments. As a result, student athletes who want to participate in interscholastic athletic programming for the remainder of the 2021-2022 academic year are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

By when do I need to receive a COVID-19 vaccination in order to be ready for the winter and spring sports seasons?

Student athletes participating in winter sports will be required to be fully vaccinated by December 18th, 2021, in order to participate in their sport at the start of the season. Student athletes participating in Spring sports will need to be fully vaccinated by March 1, 2022.

Season	Sports	Full Vaccination Deadline	Get The First Dose By	Get The Second Dose By
Winter	Basketball, Bowling, Cheerleading, Indoor Track, Swimming, Wrestling	December 18, 2021	November 13, 2021	December 4, 2021
Spring	Badminton, Baseball, Lacrosse, Softball, Tennis, Track & Field, and Volleyball.	March 1, 2022	January 25, 2022	February 15, 2022

Where can I get vaccinated if I haven't received one or both vaccine doses?

Vaccines are available at many locations across Philadelphia. All students can receive the COVID-19 vaccine at pop-up vaccine events at District schools in partnership with a vaccine provider, pharmacies, city health centers or through primary care providers.

Upcoming district sponsored vaccine events can be found on www.philasd.org/studenthealth. Vaccine events sponsored by the city's health department can be found [HERE](#).

How do I show proof of vaccination?

Athletes must submit a copy of their vaccine card to the school which will be entered into the Student Information System (SIS). The Student Information System is a secure system which is utilized by the District to maintain protected student health information. Vaccination status will be used to determine who does and does not need to quarantine in the event of a positive case of COVID-19 in a student or staff member.

What if I miss the December 18th deadline to be fully vaccinated?

Students who are not fully vaccinated by December 18th will not be eligible to play until they provide proof of full vaccination to the school.

Does the district permit exceptions to the requirement for a vaccine for student athletes?

Yes. Exceptions to the COVID-19 vaccine requirement may be granted for verifiable medical or religious-based reasons and can be requested by completion of the [Immunization Exemption Form](#). Immunization exemption forms must be submitted directly to the school nurse. A request for exemption must be completed 7 days prior to the season start.

What will happen if I don't have proof of vaccination when my sport's season begins?

Student athletes who are not vaccinated or do not submit proper proof of vaccination by the required deadline, or have not submitted a Immunization Exemption will be removed from their team's roster and lose access to all privileges afforded to student-athletes, including team or individual practice, competition and any sport facility until they can provide full proof of vaccination.

Will middle school athletes participating in interscholastic sports be required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes. Middle school athletes participating in interscholastic sports will be required to receive the first dose of the vaccine by 45 days after approval for students ages 5-11 years. The second dose will then be required 21 days after the first dose.

I turn 12 after the sports season begins. How much time do I have to be fully vaccinated?

Students who are newly eligible for vaccination will have 45 days after their 12th birthday to get their first dose, and must get their second vaccine dose no later than 8 weeks after their 12th birthday.

How much does the COVID-19 vaccine cost?

The COVID-19 vaccine is available to all at no cost, regardless of insurance or immigration status.

Do all of the COVID-19 vaccines (Moderna, Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson) fulfill the requirement?

Currently, the Pfizer vaccine is the only one available to students less than 18 years of age. Students 18 and older can receive Johnson & Johnson, Moderna, or Pfizer vaccines to meet the requirement.

Do I need to carry my vaccine card with me at all times?

No. Students should provide proof of vaccination to their school. Once proof is received students are not required to carry their vaccine card.

Will this requirement change weekly testing requirements?

Student-athletes who are fully vaccinated will not be required to test two times weekly for COVID-19. Students will have to continue to test weekly until 2 weeks after the second dose of the vaccine. Students who submit an exemption form will be tested twice weekly for COVID-19.

Even if vaccinated, anyone who experiences symptoms suggestive of a COVID-19 infection will require COVID-19 testing and require isolation if positive.

If I've already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated?

Yes, student athletes who have already had COVID-19 will still be required to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and provide proof of vaccination. Research has not yet shown how long one is protected from getting COVID-19 again after an infection. Vaccination helps prevent another infection. For this reason, all student athletes are required to be vaccinated even if previously infected.

Are coaches and athletic staff required to be vaccinated?

Yes. Coaches and other athletic staff are required to be vaccinated as part of District policy.

Do students who attend charter schools and do not participate in District interscholastic sports have to be vaccinated?

No. This mandate does not apply to students who attend charter schools and only participate in athletic programs as members of their charter school team(s).

Are students who attend Charter, Cyber or Home Schools and play on a District interscholastic sports team required to adhere to the vaccine mandate for District student-athletes?

Yes. All student-athletes on District teams are required to be fully vaccinated. Please submit proof of COVID-19 vaccination directly to your coach.

Students who are granted exemptions on the basis of medical or religious reasons will be required to obtain COVID-19 testing twice weekly.

What does unvaccinated, partially vaccinated and fully vaccinated for COVID-19 mean?

Unvaccinated: An individual who has not received any doses of a COVID-19 vaccine.

Partially vaccinated: An individual who has received one dose or who has received their second dose, but 14 days has not yet passed since the second dose. For purposes of this mandate, this individual needs to abide by the requirements of an unvaccinated individual.

Fully Vaccinated: An individual who has received the second dose of a 2-dose vaccine series and 14 days has passed since that second dose or one dose of an 1-dose COVID-19 vaccine and 14 days has passed since that dose.

Students who are fully vaccinated will still be required to comply with other COVID-19 mitigation strategies which are in place including mask-wearing, hand washing and social distancing when applicable.

How are colleges and universities responding to vaccine mandates?

COVID-19 vaccination for student-athletes maximizes the health and safety of the entire team and ensures the ability to conduct safe and successful sports seasons by minimizing the impact of canceling practices, games and, ultimately, seasons.

According to recent publications the nation's top 25 colleges and universities have mandated its student population to become fully vaccinated prior to stepping foot on campus. The list of all United States colleges and universities requiring COVID-19 vaccination for admission can be found [HERE](#)

Who can I talk to if I have questions or concerns?

A healthcare provider or school nurse can provide additional information about the vaccine.