



FAQ: Vaccination and Mask Mandate for City Employees
Effective Wednesday, August 11, 2021

1. Why should I get the vaccine?

Health professionals strongly recommend getting vaccinated, as it significantly decreases the chance of you getting COVID-19 disease and is very effective at preventing hospitalization and death. If you do not get vaccinated, you put not only yourself at risk, but also those you love or care about as well as those we serve as City employees. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine is a safer choice.

2. Do I need a COVID-19 vaccination to continue working for the city?

There is significant medical evidence that the COVID-19 vaccinations are the best method of protecting oneself and those they come in contact with from the virus. In order to reduce the threat that the COVID-19 virus poses to both employees and the public we serve, we are requiring that employees either be vaccinated by September 1, 2021 or double mask while at work. Unvaccinated employees may also be required to participate in regular COVID-19 testing in the future. The full policy can be found [here](#).

3. How do I verify that I've been vaccinated?

You may provide proof that you've completed your COVID-19 vaccinations in the form of an official vaccination card or other appropriate medical documentation. A copy of an employee's medical documentation of their vaccination status can be uploaded in OnePhilly through [Employee Self-Service](#) or presented to the employee's HR manager by September 1st (this can be in the form of an uploaded image of the card).

4. Can I request an accommodation from this requirement?

Employees may request an accommodation under ADA or for religious purposes but will have to provide documentation supporting a request to their departmental HR professional. Each request will be addressed on an individual basis.

5. What will happen if I do not comply with this requirement?

Although we do not want to see any employee have adverse employment action taken against them, the City of Philadelphia takes the health and welfare of our employees and the community we serve seriously. Employees who fail to comply with this requirement and have not received an approved accommodation will not be allowed to report for work and will be carried AWOL.

The employee will also be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

6. If I am working from home, do I need to comply with the new vaccination and masking requirements?

Since all employees must be available to report physically for work as needed, all employees must comply with the vaccination and masking requirement. Any employees working on-site will be required to wear a mask while indoors. For those who are unvaccinated, you will be required to double-mask in the form of a cloth mask over a surgical mask. Masks may be removed if the employee is in an office alone with the door closed or while eating and drinking at least 6 feet from others, as well as outdoors.

7. Do COVID-19 vaccines work?

Yes. The vaccines are very effective against symptomatic COVID-19 illness. For the prevention of symptomatic COVID-19, Pfizer vaccine efficacy rate is reported as 95%, Moderna vaccine efficacy rate is 94.1%, and Johnson & Johnson vaccine efficacy rate is 66% (although 72% in the United States). These are all very good efficacy rates for vaccines. In contrast, influenza vaccines are about 40-60% effective.

8. Where can I get the vaccine?

There are many ways to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. Here are some options:

- [Find a vaccination clinic](#) in Philadelphia.
- Check with your doctor's office to see if they are offering the vaccine. Hospital systems and Federally Qualified Health Centers offer vaccines to their own patients and many also hold vaccine events for community members.
- Pharmacies across the city offer COVID-19 vaccine. Most local pharmacies will give second shots to people who are due or overdue, regardless of where you got your first dose. Check with your local pharmacy for details.
- Check with your employer to see if they are planning to host a vaccine clinic with a pharmacy partner.
- Look for opportunities with community providers ([Black Doctors COVID-19 Consortium](#) and other awardees of the [COVID-19 Community Vaccination Program Request for Proposals](#)).

9. What if I lost my vaccination card?



You can request a copy of your immunization record, which verifies your COVID vaccine status, by emailing COVID@phila.gov, or by calling (215) 685-5488.

10. If I have gotten the first dose of the vaccine but haven't gotten the second dose, do I have to wear a mask?

Yes, you will be required to double-mask (cloth mask over a surgical mask) until two weeks following the completion of your schedule of COVID-19 vaccinations. At any time after September 1, 2021, an employee may still provide medical documentation that they've completed their schedule of COVID-19 vaccinations. Two weeks following the final dose date, the employee will no longer be required to double-mask.

11. What do I do if I don't want to get vaccinated?

Any employee who does not provide proof of vaccination status or is unvaccinated will need to wear respiratory protection in the form of one cloth mask over a surgical mask. If the employee is unable to obtain the required respiratory protection, it will be provided by the City.

12. I am fully vaccinated, am I required to wear a mask indoors?

Yes. Starting on August 11th, in public areas of City buildings, all City employees and members of the public will be required to wear a mask regardless of vaccination status. This is consistent with the City's [new mask mandate](#) which states that masks are required to be worn indoors unless proof of vaccination is required for entry. Fully vaccinated staff will need to only wear one mask. In areas that are not open to the public, fully vaccinated staff do not need to wear masks while unvaccinated staff will be required to be double-masked.

13. Will the City provide unvaccinated employees with surgical masks?

Yes. Employees may wear their own cloth mask over the surgical mask. If an employee does not have access to a cloth mask, they may be provided one by the City.

If departments are in need of mask supplies between now and September 1, 2021, they can submit a [resource request](#) to EOC.logistics@phila.gov and must identify the number of employees that they are requesting for. Requests should not exceed one per non-vaccinated employee per day and should specify on the request form: the on-site contact who will be receiving the masks, the location for delivery, and the hours of operation. After September 1, 2021, departments should leverage the process outlined below to purchase mask supplies.

14. How frequently do I need to change a surgical mask if I'm required to double-mask?

Daily.

15. How can my department purchase surgical masks for our unvaccinated employees?

Guidance and information on available PPE contracts can be found by visiting the [Contracts, Payments and Resource Request](#) section of the Remote Work site.