



City of Boston Policy: **COVID-19 Vaccination Verification Requirement**

<b>Purpose</b>	<p>Protecting the health, safety and economic recovery of our community requires that we work together to prevent further spread of the COVID-19 virus. The most effective tools for achieving this goal are widespread vaccinations and continuous testing.</p> <p>The purpose of this policy is to minimize exposure to and transmission of the COVID-19 virus in City workplaces by providing occupational protection to all City employees and preventing exposure to members of the community we serve.</p>
<b>Policy</b>	<p>As of the compliance deadlines specified below, all City of Boston employees covered by this policy will be required to be fully vaccinated and to verify their vaccination status, unless granted a reasonable accommodation for medical or religious reasons as specified below. Vaccines will be offered free of charge at various times and locations to allow for and encourage 100% compliance. Employees and others covered by this policy may choose to get vaccinated at non-City sites, at their option.</p> <p>Fully vaccinated employees are also encouraged but not required to engage in regular testing for the COVID-19 virus, as specified below. Employees who are not fully vaccinated and have been granted a reasonable accommodation so as to not comply with the vaccination component of this policy are required to engage in regular testing, and reporting of test results, as specified below.</p>
<b>Covered Employees</b>	<p>This policy applies to all City of Boston employees, including all full-time, part-time, seasonal, emergency and probationary workers, plus contractors and volunteers who provide services onsite at City worksites. The policy applies to all current workers, those returning from leave status and those hired in the future. The policy applies to City</p>

	<p>employees irrespective of whether an individual has been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past. The use of the term “employee” throughout this policy is intended to include all of the categories of persons identified above, except as specifically indicated.</p>
<p><b>Compliance Deadlines</b></p>	<p>All employees are required to comply with this policy on the following schedule:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>On or before January 15, 2022:</b> All employees must upload proof of at least one dose of a one- or two-dose vaccine.</li> <li>● <b>On or before February 15, 2022:</b> All employees must upload proof of two doses of a two-dose vaccine.</li> <li>● All employees who are not fully vaccinated must participate in required weekly testing until they have uploaded proof of full vaccination.</li> </ul> <p>All contractors and volunteers who provide services onsite at City worksites are required to comply with this policy on or before the earlier of the following dates: (1) the date any mandate issued by the federal government, whether through the Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s (OSHA's) COVID-19 Vaccination and Testing Emergency Temporary Standard, published on November 5, 2021 (86 Fed. Reg. 61402) or otherwise, becomes effective and in force, or (2) March 1, 2022.</p>
<p><b>How to Verify Full Vaccination Status</b></p>	<p>Employees must verify their full vaccination status by uploading a copy of their COVID-19 vaccination card, other confirmation from a health care provider, or approved alternate documentation into the City’s COVID Compliance online portal. Instructions for uploading a vaccination card, and for obtaining a copy of a lost or missing vaccination card, can be found on the City’s Beacon Portal via Access Boston.</p> <p>Vaccination card and/or other vaccination documentation submissions must include all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Employee’s name</li> <li>● Employee’s date of birth</li> <li>● The manufacturer of the vaccine</li> <li>● The date(s) on which the vaccine(s) were received</li> </ul> <p>Employees who are fully vaccinated but unable to obtain and upload a copy of their COVID-19 vaccination card or other vaccination verification documentation may upload a signed statement from a medical provider verifying their fully vaccinated status.</p>

	<p>If and/or when the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that a third or additional dose is required to complete a series for all adults, this policy is automatically amended to require, within sixty (60) days of the CDC’s action, that employees: (1) get a third or additional dose in order to be considered “fully vaccinated” and (2) upload into the COVID Compliance portal verification of that third or additional dose within thirty (30) days of the administration of the third or additional dose.</p>
<p><b>When to Verify Full Vaccination Status</b></p>	<p>On or after the original effective date of August 30, 2021 and by the dates specified herein, employees should upload their vaccination verification information into the COVID Compliance online portal.</p> <p>Employees are required to verify whether they have received one or two doses of a two-dose vaccine (Moderna or Pfizer) or have received one dose of a single-dose vaccine (Johnson &amp; Johnson). Employees are required to upload their vaccination card or other vaccination documentation to verify full vaccination status.</p> <p>Employees on approved leave status must verify their full vaccination status at least 72 hours before the date they are scheduled to return from leave status. New hires must verify their full vaccination status within the first 72 hours of the commencement of their employment with the City.</p>
<p><b>Weekly Testing Required for Employees Without Full Vaccination Verification as a Result of Accommodation or Mid-Dose Status</b></p>	<p>Only employees who are granted an accommodation as specified below or who have received and uploaded proof of one dose of a multi-dose vaccine (Moderna or Pfizer) are exempt from verifying their full vaccination status, which exemption lasts only as long as the accommodation is in effect or until the second required dose is obtained and uploaded into the COVID Compliance portal. These employees are required to submit proof of a negative COVID-19 screening test every seven (7) calendar days until fully vaccinated by uploading a copy of their negative COVID-19 screening test results into the City’s COVID Compliance online portal. Further instructions for uploading negative test results can be found on the City’s Beacon Portal via Access Boston. Other than the categories of employees identified in this section, no other employees are allowed or required to submit proof of a negative test in lieu of verifying full vaccination status after the effective dates specified above.</p> <p>Employees who have confirmed receipt of one dose of a multi-dose vaccine series will be required to submit proof of a negative COVID-19 screening test until their final vaccination dose is received within the timeframe recommended by the vaccine manufacturer and no later than February 15, 2022. Upon receipt of a final required dose, the employee should verify their full vaccination by uploading their completed vaccination card or other vaccination verification documentation into the City’s COVID Compliance portal.</p>

	<p>Employees specified in this section who test positive for COVID-19 on or after the effective date of this policy and in the period when required to upload test results must upload proof of the date of their positive test into the City’s COVID Compliance portal. Once the positive test date is submitted, for a period of 90-days post the positive test date the employee is not required to submit proof of a negative COVID-19 screening test, which requirement recommences upon expiration of the 90 days.</p> <p>Testing will be offered by the City free of charge at various times and locations to allow for and encourage 100% compliance. Employees may choose to get tested at non-City sites, at their option.</p> <p>Employees who have verified their full vaccination status are encouraged but not required to participate in regular testing, and do not need to submit their negative test results to the City.</p> <p>All employees who test positive for COVID-19 must report their positive status to the City as required by the City policy titled: <i>August 2021 Update to City of Boston Policy: Temporary COVID-19 Paid Leave for Testing and Vaccination.</i></p>
<p><b>Failure to Comply</b></p>	<p>As of the compliance dates specified in this policy, an employee who fails to submit the required proof of full vaccination status or a negative test, in the case of those who have verified one vaccination dose but not a required second shot or those granted a reasonable accommodation as specified below, will be placed on unpaid administrative leave until verification of full vaccination status is completed or a reasonable accommodation is approved if required by law. Employees may choose to use their own accrued vacation, personal or compensatory leave, not including sick time, rather than be placed on unpaid administrative leave.</p> <p>Employees allowed to verify testing status as the result of their having verified one vaccination dose but not a required second shot or having been granted a reasonable accommodation as specified below will remain in work status on days on which an employee gets tested and two days following the day the employee gets tested, to allow for a standard window of 48 hours for test processing. No more than the testing day plus two days after testing, for a total of three days, will be allowed for test processing no matter how many days processing may actually take.</p> <p>Continued failure to verify full vaccination status or submit to regular scheduled testing if approved for a reasonable accommodation will be grounds for discipline up to and including termination. Discipline will be commenced upon an employee’s being placed in leave status as a result of this policy, notwithstanding whether the employee remains unpaid</p>

	<p>or chooses to use accrued leave status to cover all scheduled working days as specified above during this period. Employees with civil service protections will have a hearing with the Office of Labor Relations and their Union scheduled within 5 days of being placed on unpaid administrative leave. Employees who are in leave status as a result of non-compliance with this policy for a cumulative and not necessarily consecutive thirty (30) calendar days, whether that leave is paid or unpaid, will be subject to termination.</p>
<p><b>Access to Vaccinations</b></p>	<p>The COVID-19 vaccine is free and available to anyone age 5 and older who lives, studies or works in Massachusetts. The <a href="#">City's COVID-19 vaccination website</a> is a useful, multilingual resource for vaccine sites, location maps and other information. The Commonwealth provides vaccination location information at <a href="#">VaxFinder.mass.gov</a>. Employees can also contact their healthcare provider or call 211 to seek appointments at medical providers, pharmacies and other community locations.</p>
<p><b>Paid Leave for Vaccinations and Testing</b></p>	<p>To encourage and assist City of Boston employees in getting fully vaccinated against and/or tested for the COVID-19 virus, the City is offering benefit eligible employees up to one (1) hour of paid leave during a workday in order to get vaccinated and/or tested. Employees may access this leave as follows:</p> <p><b>For COVID-19 Vaccination:</b> For a multi dose vaccination, twice within a forty (40) day period, at time intervals recommended by the vaccination manufacturer and/or health care provider to accommodate the recommended interval between vaccination doses, plus one or more additional occasions as recommended by the CDC for purposes of obtaining booster vaccination(s). For a one dose vaccination, once before expiration of this policy plus one or more additional occasions as recommended by the CDC for purposes of obtaining booster vaccination(s).</p> <p><b>For COVID-19 Testing:</b> Once within every seven (7) days, whether or not the employee has been vaccinated, if the employee is required to report the test to the City according to this policy</p> <p>All specifics of this paid leave benefit are documented in and governed by the terms set forth in the City of Boston policy titled: <i>August 2021 Update to City of Boston Policy: Temporary COVID-19 Paid Leave for Testing and Vaccination.</i></p>

<p><b>Reasonable Accommodations</b></p>	<p>Employees in need of an exemption from the required vaccination component of this policy due to a medical reason or because of a sincerely held religious belief must request a reasonable accommodation by completing and submitting the appropriate documentation to the Office of Human Resources (OHR) as directed, all of which is available through the “Submit a Question” link on the COVID Compliance online portal accessible through use of an employee’s Access Boston account. Upon receipt of all required documentation, OHR will begin the interactive accommodation process with the employee. Accommodations will be granted when the required legal standards are met and the accommodation does not cause undue hardship or pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others.</p> <p><u>Accommodation Based on Medical Reasons:</u> A certification must be signed by a health care provider and must certify that the employee is under the provider’s medical care and should be exempt from receiving the COVID-19 vaccination due to medical contraindications. A vaccination waiver granted for medical reasons does not exempt the employee from the requirement of regular testing.</p> <p><u>Accommodation Based on Religious Reasons:</u> A request for exemption due to sincerely held religious beliefs must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signed by the employee and/or the employee’s religious/spiritual leader</li> <li>• Expressly certify that political, social, scientific, or other non-religious views are not sufficient justification for a religious exemption under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 [42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2(a)(1), (2)]; and</li> <li>• Include the employee’s explanation of their religious or religious-type beliefs and why those beliefs prevent vaccination and/or testing.</li> </ul> <p>A vaccination waiver granted for religious reasons does not exempt the employee from the requirement of regular testing.</p> <p>Employees who are granted a reasonable accommodation for medical or religious reasons are required to submit proof of a negative COVID-19 screening test every seven (7) calendar days by uploading a copy of their negative COVID-19 screening test results to the City’s COVID Compliance online portal. Further instructions for uploading negative test results can be found on the City’s Beacon portal via Access Boston.</p>
<p><b>Vaccination Incentive</b></p>	<p>For a period of at least one month, the City will conduct a weekly lottery, the winner of which will be granted an extra one week of paid time off. All benefit eligible employees who verify their full vaccination status during the preceding week will be automatically entered into the lottery. The extra one week of time granted must be used by December 2022, and is not subject to any annual buy back, rollover or severance.</p>

<p><b>Acceptable Vaccinations and Tests</b></p>	<p>All vaccines authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) or the World Health Organization (WHO) will meet the City’s vaccine verification requirement. Either a PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) test or an antigen test will be accepted as proof of a negative COVID-19 screening test; antibody tests will not be accepted.</p>
<p><b>Privacy of Medical Information</b></p>	<p>Individually identifiable health information will be maintained in a confidential manner as required by applicable law.</p>
<p><b>Effective Date</b></p>	<p>This policy is <b>effective as of</b> August 12, 2021 and was amended on August 30, 2021 and <b>December 20, 2021</b>. The amendments made on December 20, 2021 become effective on January 15, 2022; until that time the pre-December 20, 2021 version of the policy remains in full force and effect.</p>