



MCPS ATHLETICS

RETURN to R.A.I.S.E.

Vaccination Requirements - FAQs

The following are answers to frequently asked questions regarding the vaccination requirements for student-athletes, coaches, athletic trainers, and other athletic department personnel. Requirements are listed first, followed by the FAQs and answers.

Vaccination Requirements

Student-Athlete Vaccination Requirements

All high school and eligible middle school student-athletes are required to submit proof of full COVID-19 vaccination prior to participation. This requirement applies to all in-season and out-of-season activities conducted through MCPS Athletics.

Student-Athlete Vaccination Exemptions

Only medical exemptions are permitted. Religious exemptions are not permitted. Religious exemptions are not being permitted due to the direct threat of COVID-19 transmission to the health and safety of student-athletes and staff in close-contact sporting events and activities.

MCPS Form 560-30A: COVID-19 Vaccine Medical Exemption Request for Student-Athletes must be completed by a licensed health care professional and submitted during the registration process for athletics. The form is available in [English and Spanish](#).

Stipend (Paid) Coaches & Athletic Department Personnel

Consistent with MCPS requirements for staff members, coaches and athletic department personnel must submit proof of vaccination, unless staff request and are granted an exemption. If a medical/religious exemption is granted, the employee must submit to regular COVID-19 testing as required by MCPS.

- **Religious Exemption:** Email [this form](#) to Heather_Dublinkske@mcpsmd.org or submit electronically [here](#).
- **Medical Exemption:** Email [this form](#) to Khalid_D_Walker@mcpsmd.org or use the process outlined below and at [this link](#).

Volunteer Coaches

All volunteer coaches are required to complete an additional module via their myMCPS Classroom/Canvas account called COVID-19 Vaccination Attestation in order to volunteer within our school district. The new module will consist of a volunteer a) attesting to being fully vaccinated, b) uploading their Certificate of COVID-19 Vaccination from the Maryland Department of Health, and c) agreeing to specific expectations of masking and social distancing while in MCPS facilities.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q - Why is MCPS requiring vaccinations?

A - MCPS' top priority is keeping schools open and students and staff safe. Vaccinations play a critical role in supporting this priority and minimizing interruptions to in-person learning and program activities. Vaccinations are the best path forward to promoting the R.A.I.S.E. core values of academic excellence and safe competition in all settings.

Q - Who supports the decision to require vaccinations?

A - This requirement is supported by the COVID-19 Task Force for MCPS Athletics, which includes representation from the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services and the Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, along with multiple MCPS departments. This requirement also aligns with recommendations from the CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine.

Q - What is the definition of fully vaccinated?

A - The [CDC defines](#) fully vaccinated as:

- Two weeks after a second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, **OR**
- Two weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as the Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine.

Q - When is the deadline for student-athletes to be fully vaccinated?

A – High school student-athletes must be fully vaccinated by Tuesday, March 1, 2022, for spring sports and all other activities that begin as of this date. This means spring student-athletes must have received their second shot (or first Johnson & Johnson) no later than Tuesday, February 15, 2022.

Middle school student-athletes must be fully vaccinated by Tuesday, March 8, 2022, for spring sports and all other activities that begin as of this date. This means spring student-athletes must have received their second shot (or first Johnson & Johnson) no later than Tuesday, February 22, 2022.

Q – Will high school students be able to try out for spring sports on Tuesday, March 1, 2022, if they have not been fully vaccinated?

A - No. Students must be fully vaccinated in order to participate in tryouts.

Q – Will middle school students be able to try out for spring sports on Tuesday, March 8, 2022, if they have not been fully vaccinated?

A - No. Students must be fully vaccinated in order to participate in tryouts.

Q - What percentage of the Montgomery County population is fully vaccinated?

A - [As of January 14, 2022](#), 95% of the 12 and older population in Montgomery County is fully vaccinated and 95% of all eligible residents have received one dose.

Q - Are there exemptions to the vaccination requirement?

A - Yes. Students may be exempted from immunization requirements if an authorized health care professional certifies that there is a medical reason not to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Q - How do I submit a request for a medical exemption?

A - MCPS Form 560-30A: *COVID-19 Vaccine Medical Exemption Request for Student-Athletes* must be completed by a licensed health care professional and submitted during the registration process for athletics. Forms may be uploaded electronically during the online registration process or, for those utilizing paper forms, a hard copy may be submitted to the athletics specialist (high school) or athletic coordinator (middle school) at the local school. The form is available for printing at these links - [English and Spanish](#).

Q - Can student-athletes apply for a religious exemption?

A - No.

Q - Why are religious exemptions not allowed?

A - Religious exemptions are not being permitted due to the direct threat of COVID-19 transmission to the health and safety of student-athletes and staff in close-contact sporting events and activities. Guidance from the CDC recommends that all eligible K-12 students be vaccinated. The CDC specifically recommends that student-athletes be vaccinated due to increased exhalation that occurs during physical activity and the sustained close contact of sports that puts individuals at an increased risk for getting and spreading COVID-19. Further, the risk of COVID-19 spread increases the more time athletes, coaches, teachers, staff and spectators spend in close proximity or in indoor group settings. This includes time spent traveling to/from sporting events, meetings, meals, and other settings related to the events. MCPS implemented the student-athlete vaccine mandate in accordance with Maryland Department of Health and State Board of Education joint COVID-19 guidance, which states, "Each local school system, nonpublic school, and childcare program may set their own policies and procedures for their schools, students/ children, teachers and staff."

Q - Can I register for spring sports without being fully vaccinated or without proof of a medical exemption?

A - No. Students must be fully vaccinated or submit proof of a medical exemption in order to complete the registration process.

Q - How will student-athletes submit proof of vaccination? How about proof of exemption?

A - Proof of vaccination/exemption will be submitted during the online registration process through [ParentVUE](#).

Q - Where can I go to print my vaccination certificate?

A - Vaccination certificates can be downloaded and printed at this [link](#). Individuals who received vaccinations at a Montgomery County DHHS Vaccination Clinic can request a copy by email at c19vaccination@montgomerycountymd.gov, or otherwise contact the provider where the vaccination was administered. Official vaccination records from an authorized health care provider are valid.

Q - What forms are acceptable for verifying vaccinations?

A - Vaccination cards, certificates, or approval from an authorized health care provider.

Q - Are there vaccination clinics available?

A - Yes. Information regarding clinics is available [here](#).

Q - Is there a testing option for student-athletes?

A - No. Students must be fully vaccinated or have submitted an approved medical exemption in order to participate in the MCPS interscholastic athletics program.

Q - Will MCPS teams be able to compete against other schools and school systems that do not require vaccinations?

A - Yes.

Q - Where can I find the latest guidance regarding the COVID-19 operating procedures and protocols for MCPS Athletics?

A - Updates and guidance are available on the [COVID-19 Athletics Information webpage](#).