

Mohawk Valley Community College

COVID-19 Vaccination, Testing, and Face Covering Policy

Purpose:

Vaccination is a vital tool to reduce the presence and severity of COVID-19 cases in the workplace, in communities, and in the nation as a whole. Mohawk Valley Community College (MVCC) encourages all employees to receive a COVID-19 vaccination to protect themselves, students, and other employees. However, should an employee choose not to be vaccinated, this policy's sections on testing and face coverings will apply.

Scope:

This COVID-19 Policy on vaccination, testing, and face covering use applies to all employees of MVCC, except for employees who do not report to a workplace where other individuals (such as coworkers or customers) are present; employees while working from home; and employees who work exclusively outdoors.

All employees are encouraged to be fully vaccinated. Employees are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after completing primary vaccination with a COVID-19 vaccine with, if applicable, at least the minimum recommended interval between doses. For example, this includes two weeks after a second dose in a two-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, two weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's vaccine, or two weeks after the second dose of any combination of two doses of different COVID-19 vaccines as part of one primary vaccination series. Employees who are not fully vaccinated will be required to provide proof of weekly COVID-19 testing and wear a face covering at the workplace.

Some employees may be required to have or obtain a COVID-19 vaccination as a term and condition of employment at MVCC, due to their specific job duties (e.g., public facing positions). Employees subject to mandatory vaccination requirements should follow all relevant vaccination procedures in this policy and are not given the choice to choose testing and face covering use in lieu of vaccination. All faculty with clinical obligations at healthcare institutions have been mandated to be vaccinated per the rules of the clinical site.

All employees are highly encouraged to report their vaccination status and, if vaccinated, provide proof of vaccination. Employees must provide truthful and accurate information about their COVID-19 vaccination status, and, if not fully vaccinated, their testing results. Employees not in compliance with this policy will be subject to discipline in accordance with MVCC Policy or the collective bargaining agreement.

Employees may request an exception from vaccination requirements (if applicable) if the vaccine is medically contraindicated for them or medical necessity requires a delay in vaccination. Employees also may be legally entitled to a reasonable accommodation if they cannot be vaccinated and/or wear a face covering (as otherwise required by this policy) because of a disability, or if the provisions in this policy for vaccination, and/or testing for COVID-19, and/or wearing a face covering conflict with a sincerely held religious belief, practice, or observance. Requests for exceptions and reasonable accommodations must be initiated by contacting Gail Warchol in Human Resources at (315) 792-5496 or gwarchol@mvcc.edu. All such requests will be handled in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Procedures:

Overview and General Information

Vaccination

Any MVCC employee that chooses to or is required to be vaccinated against COVID-19 must be fully vaccinated no later than January 10, 2022. Any employee not fully vaccinated by January 10, 2022 will continue to be subject to the regular testing until full vaccination is achieved, which has been in force since September 27, 2021.

To be fully vaccinated, an employee must:

- Obtain the second dose of a two dose vaccine; or
- Obtain one dose of a single dose vaccine.

Employees will be considered fully vaccinated two weeks after receiving the requisite number of doses of a COVID-19 vaccine as stated above. An employee will be considered partially vaccinated if they have received only one dose of a two dose vaccine.

You may schedule your vaccination appointments through Oneida County at <https://ocgov.net/oneida/health> or visit your specific County's website. Please note that there are occasionally vaccination clinics at MVCC which are listed on Oneida County's website when they are available. You may also schedule vaccination appointments with your primary care physician. Appointments may be available at local drug stores through their website.

Testing and Face Coverings

All employees who are not fully vaccinated as of January 10, 2022 will continue to be required to undergo weekly COVID-19 testing until full vaccination has been achieved, which has been in force since September 27, 2021. All employees who are both fully vaccinated and have received a booster will be exempt from required surveillance testing. Face coverings are optional. Procedures for testing and face coverings are described in the relevant sections of this document.

Vaccination Status and Acceptable Forms of Proof of Vaccination

Vaccinated Employees

All vaccinated employees are required to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination, regardless of where they received vaccination. Proof of vaccination status can be submitted via the portal at the following link: [Disclosure of Vaccination Status Form](#). If you are logged onto the network with your username and password, you will not need to log in. If you are asked for a username and password, you will use the same username and password you use to sign onto your computer. If you do not have access to a computer, provide proof of documentation to the Human Resources department in the Academic Building Room 113. You must submit a new form any time your vaccination status changes.

Acceptable proof of vaccination status is:

1. The record of immunization from a health care provider or pharmacy;
2. A copy of the COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card;
3. A copy of medical records documenting the vaccination;

4. A copy of immunization records from a public health, state, or tribal immunization information system; or
5. A copy of any other official documentation that contains the type of vaccine administered, date(s) of administration, and the name of the health care professional(s) or clinic site(s) administering the vaccine(s).

Proof of vaccination generally should include the employee’s name, date of birth, the type of vaccine administered, the date(s) of administration, and the name of the health care professional(s) or clinic site(s) that administered the vaccine. In some cases, state immunization records may not include one or more of these data fields, such as clinic site; in those circumstances MVCC will still accept the state immunization record as acceptable proof of vaccination.

If an employee is unable to produce one of these acceptable forms of proof of vaccination, despite attempts to do so (e.g., by trying to contact the vaccine administrator or state health department), the employee can provide a signed and dated statement attesting to their vaccination status (fully vaccinated or partially vaccinated); attesting that they have lost and are otherwise unable to produce one of the other forms of acceptable proof; and including the following language:

“I declare (or certify, verify, or state) that this statement about my vaccination status is true and accurate. I understand that knowingly providing false information regarding my vaccination status on this form may subject me to criminal penalties.”

An employee who attests to their vaccination status in this way should to the best of their recollection, include in their attestation the type of vaccine administered, the date(s) of administration, and the name of the health care professional(s) or clinic site(s) administering the vaccine.

Unvaccinated Employees

All employees are highly encouraged to disclose vaccination status. Employees who are not yet vaccinated or are partially vaccinated may provide proof of vaccination status via the portal at the following link: [Disclosure of Vaccination Status Form](#). A new form must be submitted if vaccination status changes. If an employee does not disclose vaccination status, they will be subject to all testing, mask and quarantine requirements of an unvaccinated employee.

All Employees

The following table outlines the requirements for submitting vaccination status documentation at the following link: [Disclosure of Vaccination Status Form](#).

Vaccination Status	Instructions
Employees who have received a booster.	Submit proof of booster vaccination.
Employees who are fully vaccinated.	Submit proof of vaccination that indicates full vaccination.
Employees who are partially vaccinated (i.e., one dose of a two dose vaccine series).	Submit proof of vaccination that indicates when the first dose of vaccination was received, followed by proof of the second dose when it is obtained.
Employees who are not vaccinated.	Submit statement that you are unvaccinated, but are planning to receive a vaccination by the deadline.
	Submit statement that you are unvaccinated and not planning to receive a vaccination.

Supporting COVID-19 Vaccination

An employee may take up to four hours of duty time per dose to travel to the vaccination site, receive a vaccination, and return to work. Per the New York State Department of Labor, this applies to any COVID-19 vaccination received by an employee, including booster shots. This would mean a maximum of eight hours of duty time for employees receiving two doses and a maximum of 12 hours for employees who receive a booster. If an employee spends less time getting the vaccine, only the necessary amount of duty time will be granted. Employees who take longer than four hours to get the vaccine must send their supervisor and Human Resources an email documenting the reason for the additional time (e.g., they may need to travel long distances to get the vaccine). Any additional time requested will be granted, if reasonable, but will not be paid; in that situation, the employee can elect to use accrued leave, e.g., sick leave, to cover the additional time. If an employee is vaccinated outside of their approved duty time they will not be compensated.

Employees may utilize up to two workdays of accrued sick leave immediately following each dose if they have side effects from the COVID-19 vaccination that prevent them from working.

The following procedures apply for requesting and granting duty time to obtain the COVID-19 vaccine or sick leave to recover from side effects:

1. Request the leave through your supervisor for attendance purposes.
2. Contact Gail Warchol at gwarchol@mvcc.edu or (315) 792-5496 to request a Paid Vaccination Leave Form and to get further details.
3. After your appointment, complete Paid Vaccination Leave Form along with copy of vaccination card and submit to Gail Warchol in Human Resources.

Employee Notification of COVID-19 and Removal from the Workplace

MVCC will require employees to promptly notify their supervisor and Gail Warchol in Human Resources when they have tested positive for COVID-19 or have been diagnosed with COVID-19 by a licensed healthcare provider. Employees who receive a positive test result through testing done at MVCC will be notified by Human Resources.

Medical Removal from the Workplace

MVCC will immediately remove an employee from the workplace if they have received a positive COVID-19 test or have been diagnosed with COVID-19 by a licensed healthcare provider (i.e., immediately send them home or to seek medical care, as appropriate). These employees may be approved by their supervisor and Human Resources to work remotely if their job allows and if they are able. Employees who cannot work remotely may be eligible for NYS COVID-19 sick leave. If COVID-19 sick leave is exhausted, employees may utilize accrued paid time off such as sick leave or other accrued paid leave or unpaid FMLA leave if eligible. Human Resources will notify employees who test positive of their leave entitlement and options.

Return to Work Criteria

For any employee removed because they are COVID-19 positive, MVCC will keep them removed from the workplace until the employee's isolation dates are completed; receives a negative result on a COVID-19 nucleic acid amplification test (NAAT) following a positive result on a COVID-19 antigen test if the employee chooses to seek a NAAT test for confirmatory testing; meets the return to work criteria in CDC's "Isolation Guidance" or the County Department of Health's requirements; or receives a recommendation to return to work from a licensed healthcare provider.

Under CDC's "[Isolation Guidance](#)," asymptomatic employees may return to work once 5 days have passed since the positive test as long as you have no symptoms. Symptomatic employees must isolate for at least 5 days. To calculate your 5-day isolation period, day 0 is your first day of symptoms. Day 1 is the first full day after your symptoms developed. You can leave isolation after 5 full days if:

- You can end isolation after 5 full days if you are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and your other symptoms have improved (Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation).
- You should continue to wear a well-fitting mask around others at home and in public for 5 additional days (day 6 through day 10) after the end of your 5-day isolation period. If you are unable to wear a mask when around others, you should continue to isolate for a full 10 days. Avoid people who are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease, and nursing homes and other high-risk settings, until after at least 10 days.
- If you continue to have fever or your other symptoms have not improved after 5 days of isolation, you should wait to end your isolation until you are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and your other symptoms have improved. Continue to wear a well-fitting mask. Contact your healthcare provider if you have questions.
- Do not travel during your 5-day isolation period. After you end isolation, avoid travel until a full 10 days after your first day of symptoms. If you must travel on days 6-10, wear a well-fitting mask when you are around others for the entire duration of travel. If you are unable to wear a mask, you should not travel during the 10 days.
- Do not go to places where you are unable to wear a mask, such as restaurants and some gyms, and avoid eating around others at home and at work until a full 10 days after your first day of symptoms.

If an employee has severe COVID-19 or an immune disease, MVCC will follow the guidance of a licensed healthcare provider regarding return to work. All documentation must be submitted to Gail Warchol in Human Resources before an employee may return to work.

COVID-19 Weekly Testing

All employees who are not fully vaccinated will be required to comply with this policy for testing.

Employees who report to the workplace at least once every seven days:

(A) must be tested at the college for COVID-19 at least once every seven days; or

(B) must provide documentation of the most recent COVID-19 test result by downloading their results to: [Employee Testing Share File](#) or email their results to gwarchol@mvcc.edu no later than the seventh day following the date on which the employee last provided a test result.

Any employee who does not report to the workplace during a period of seven or more days (e.g., if they were teleworking for two weeks prior to reporting to the workplace):

(A) must be tested for COVID-19 within seven days prior to returning to the workplace; and

(B) must provide documentation of that test result to: [Employee Testing Share File](#) or email their results to gwarchol@mvcc.edu upon return to the workplace.

If an employee does not provide documentation of a COVID-19 test result as required by this policy, they will be removed from the workplace until they provide a test result.

Employees who have received a positive COVID-19 test or have been diagnosed with COVID-19 by a licensed healthcare provider, are not required to undergo COVID-19 testing for 90 days following the date of their positive test or diagnosis.

Employees will have the option of utilizing a self-service model on both the Utica and Rome campuses for employee COVID-19 testing. Employees have the option of logging into the app and taking the test in the privacy of their own space or continuing to have staff assist. Those who choose the self-service route will be given vials and trained by staff on how to log the test within the app. Those testing with assistance, and those turning in a completed test must follow the schedule below.

Utica Campus

- Go to the Health Center on Mondays from 9-11 am or Tuesdays from 1- 3 pm to turn in testing vials or be tested with staff.

Rome Campus

- Employees may go to Student Services anytime on Mondays, 9-4pm for both instructions on this self-service model or to be tested by Rome staff.

Prior to coming onto campus for your COVID-19 testing, you are required to create an account in the Clarify app. Create a COVID-19 Surveillance Account and complete your profile before testing by clicking [here](#). **If you created an account for a previous testing, there is no need to create a new one, but you will want to go in to verify that your information is correct.**

If an employee chooses to test off campus at another location, test results must be submitted here: [E-COVID Employee Test](#). Please keep in mind many testing facilities require appointments to be made up to a week in advance.

COVID-19 Surveillance Testing

Per SUNY Guidance issued December 31, 2021, all employees regardless of vaccination status must participate in surveillance testing. A sampling of employees with a regular physical presence on the MVCC campus will be tested monthly. Employees who have received a booster will be exempt for surveillance testing by submitting proof of a booster here: [Disclosure of Vaccination Status Form](#).

Face Coverings

Effective Marcy, 9, 2022, face coverings are optional for all employees. An employee's decision to continue to wear a mask when inside buildings is a personal one and should not be judged or interpreted as a symbol of vaccination status. Per [CDC](#), you may continue to wear a mask based on personal preference and informed by your personal level of risk. You may also choose to wear a mask or respirator that offers greater protection in certain situations, such as:

- If you are sick and need to be around others or are caring for someone who has COVID-19, continue to wear a mask.
- If you are at increased risk for severe illness or live with or spend time with someone at higher risk, speak to your healthcare provider about wearing a mask.
- People who have a condition or are taking medications that weaken their immune system may not be fully protected even if they are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines. They should talk to their healthcare providers about what additional precautions may be necessary.

Face coverings must: (i) completely cover the nose and mouth; (ii) be made with two or more layers of a breathable fabric that is tightly woven (i.e., fabrics that do not let light pass through when held up to a light source); (iii) be secured to the head with ties, ear loops, or elastic bands that go behind the head. If gaiters are worn, they should have two layers of fabric or be folded to make two layers; (iv) fit snugly over the nose, mouth, and chin with no large gaps on the outside of the face; and (v) be a solid piece of material without slits, exhalation valves, visible holes, punctures, or other openings. Acceptable face coverings include clear face coverings or cloth face coverings with a clear plastic panel that, despite the non-cloth material allowing light to pass through, otherwise meet these criteria and which may be used to facilitate communication with people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing or others who need to see a speaker's mouth or facial expressions to understand speech or sign language respectively.

Policies and procedures for face coverings will be implemented in accordance with federal, state, and local mandates as part of a multi-layered infection control approach for unvaccinated workers.

Face coverings are available throughout all MVCC buildings. If you need to request additional face coverings, you may contact the Facilities department.

New Hires:

All new employees are required to comply with the vaccination, testing, and face covering requirements outlined in this policy as soon as practicable and as a condition of employment. Potential candidates for employment will be notified of the requirements of this policy prior to the start of employment. Supervisors will notify new hires at the time of making a verbal offer and information will be included in the offer letter. The new hire must submit negative test results or proof of vaccination to Human Resources prior to first date of employment.

Confidentiality and Privacy:

All medical information collected from individuals, including vaccination information, test results, and any other information obtained as a result of testing, will be treated in accordance with applicable laws and policies on confidentiality and privacy.

Questions:

Please direct any questions regarding this policy to the Human Resources Department.

Approved: 1/10/2022
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