

Policies and Procedures Handbook

Illinois Institute of Technology

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Subject: COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement
and Reopening Policy

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I. General Purpose

The university has striven to support, and will continue to strive to support, its faculty, staff, and students during the COVID-19 pandemic and for a period of time after the pandemic during which COVID-19 continues to circulate among the population. In return, the university expects all faculty, staff, and students to act in a socially responsible manner to help limit the spread of COVID-19. To be clear, as long as COVID-19 is circulating, returning to the campuses for normal operations comes with risks that all are assuming, but collective action by all faculty, staff, and students can mitigate these risks. Adherence to this policy is a key component of such mitigation.

II. Scope/Applicability

This policy applies to all university faculty, staff, and students, and it is effective as of August 2, 2021.

III. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, the following terms shall have the following meanings.

“Authorized Vaccine” shall mean any vaccine that is authorized, or becomes authorized, on an emergency or full basis by the FDA (www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/covid-19-vaccines) or the World Health Organization (covid19.trackvaccines.org/agency/who).

“CDC” means the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“FDA” means the United States Food and Drug Administration.

“Fully Vaccinated” shall mean an individual who has received their full vaccination regime and for whom the prescribed amount of time (most commonly two weeks) for the vaccine to take full effect following the last shot has elapsed.

IV. Required Vaccination Policy and Reporting

Findings. The university has determined that COVID-19 vaccines are now widely accessible, with free, walk-up appointments being readily available across the Chicago region. This City of Chicago website assists individuals with scheduling vaccination appointments—www.chicago.gov/city/en/sites/covid19-vaccine/home/vaccine-finder.html. Further, the

university has determined that requiring vaccinations will enhance the health and safety of the university community and efficient operations of the campus. The university also believes that the safety and efficacy of the various COVID-19 vaccines have been demonstrated, and we urge all employees and students to review data on the website of the CDC— www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety.html— and FDA— www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/covid-19-vaccines. And, the Illinois Board of Higher Education has advised colleges and universities to require COVID-19 vaccinations of their campus populations— [www.ibhe.org/pdf/Higher Education Phase 5 Guidance Final Issued 7-19-21.pdf](http://www.ibhe.org/pdf/Higher_Education_Phase_5_Guidance_Final_Issued_7-19-21.pdf).

(a) *COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements.* Based on the determinations set forth in the *Findings* section above, and subject to limited exceptions noted in Section V and any obligations to bargain regarding the same with respect to employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement, it is the policy of the university that all currently employed faculty and staff members who work on campus for any period of time and all currently enrolled students who attend any classes on campus must be Fully Vaccinated in accordance with the following schedule:

- (i) Any faculty or staff member or student residing in the United States on or before August 2, 2021, must receive at least their first shot of an Authorized Vaccine on or before August 15, 2021, and must report, in accordance with subsection (b) or (c) below, as applicable, this fact to the university by this same date; any required second dose of an Authorized Vaccine, if any, must be received within the applicable timeframe established for the particular vaccine and promptly reported to the university upon receipt; and
- (ii) Any faculty or staff member or student who begins to reside in the United States after August 2, 2021, must receive at least their first shot of an Authorized Vaccine on or before September 17, 2021, and must report, in accordance with subsection (b) or (c) below, as applicable, this fact to the university by this same date; any required second dose of an Authorized Vaccine, if any, must be received with the applicable timeframe established for the particular vaccine and promptly reported to the university upon receipt.
- (iii) Any eligible faculty or staff member or student must receive a COVID-19 vaccine booster shot no later than January 24, 2022 (the first day of scheduled in-person instruction of the spring semester), and for others, as soon thereafter as they are eligible, and must report, in accordance with subsection (b) or (c) below, as applicable, this fact to the university by this same date. Eligible individuals are those who (A) received their second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccination at least six months prior, or (B) received the Johnson & Johnson vaccination at least two months prior. Pursuant to [CDC guidance](#), those who have been Fully Vaccinated outside of the U.S. with a WHO-EUL approved vaccine are eligible for a single booster shot of Pfizer vaccine at least six months after full vaccination. If you have already received an approved exemption from COVID-19 vaccination, you will continue to be exempt from this booster requirement.

Any individual newly hired by the university as a faculty or staff member or any student newly admitted to the university after August 2, 2021, must be Fully Vaccinated prior to commencing employment or enrollment. Any individual newly hired by the university as a faculty or staff member or any student newly admitted to the university after January 24, 2022, in addition to being Fully Vaccinated prior to commencing employment or enrollment, must have received a booster dose or be prepared to receive the booster dose as soon as such individual is eligible.

Faculty or staff members may get their Authorized Vaccine and booster during their regularly scheduled work hours contingent on supervisor approval. University employees who request time off for COVID-19 vaccinations will be paid for up to two hours for each appointment—up to four hours of total pay for initial vaccination and an additional two hours for the booster. The employee's supervisor must approve their leave to receive their Authorized Vaccine during working hours to minimize business interruptions.

(b) *Reporting—Faculty and Staff.* Faculty and staff are to electronically upload proof of their COVID-19 vaccinations and booster to the Office of Human Resource via this link—[Faculty & Staff Vaccination Documentation](#). Proof must be either a CDC-issued COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card or an electronic health record from a healthcare provider or healthcare system. This link may also be used to submit the results of a COVID-19 test, if required.

(c) *Reporting—Students.* Students will electronically upload proof of their COVID-19 vaccination and booster to the Student Health and Wellness Center via this link—[Student Vaccination Documentation](#). Proof must be either a CDC-issued COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card or an electronic health record from by a healthcare provider or healthcare system. This link may also be used to submit the results of a COVID-19 test, if required.

(d) *Confidentiality.* Proof of vaccination status submitted by faculty and staff members will only be reviewed by personnel of the Office of Human Resources. Proof of vaccination status submitted by students will only be reviewed by personnel of the Student Health and Wellness Center. All such documentation will be maintained in accordance with applicable privacy laws.

(e) *Face Coverings.* Effective April 5, 2022, the university is mask-optional on campus. Consistent with [CDC Guidance](#) on when to use a mask, the university may designate one or more areas on campus as “mask-required” including, without limitation, classrooms, laboratories, or other instructional spaces, as well as sporting events and other activities and venues such as performances, productions, or social events. In addition, the university may require the use of masks in response to currently effective federal, state, municipal, or other applicable public health requirements. Nothing in this policy precludes any individual from wearing a mask in any on-campus area, and the university encourages students, faculty, staff, and visitors to wear masks if wearing a mask makes them more comfortable. Mask use is still suggested as an effective strategy for enhanced personal protection, including for: (i) university personnel and students with approved COVID-19 vaccine exemptions (such individuals continue to be subject to testing requirements); (ii) immunocompromised individuals or those at high risk for severe illness; or (iii) anyone with a perceived increased situational risk. Nothing in this section is intended to relieve an individual from adhering to the masking requirement under Section VI hereof.

V. Exceptions

(a) *Allowed Exceptions.* The university will recognize two limited exceptions to its vaccination requirement—(i) health reasons (permanent or temporary), and (ii) a deeply held religious belief.

(b) *Health.* Any faculty or staff member or student requesting a permanent health exception must provide the university with documentation thereof from a licensed medical provider. Any faculty and staff members or students requesting a temporary exception due to the fact that: (i) they have recently tested positive for COVID-19 or undergone antibody therapy in the last 90 days, or (ii) they are pregnant, breastfeeding, or any other temporary health condition that is a contraindication to the COVID-19 vaccine or booster, must provide the university with documentation thereof from a licensed medical provider; provided, however, faculty and staff members and students granted a temporary exception will be expected to fulfill their vaccination requirements once the bases for their temporary exception ceases to exist and they are cleared by their healthcare provider. A faculty or staff member seeking a health exception should submit this documentation to the Office of Human Resources via this link—[Faculty & Staff Medical Vaccine Exception Requests](#). A student seeking a health exception should submit this documentation to the Center for Disability Resources via this link—[Student Medical Vaccine Exception Requests](#). The documentation will be reviewed in accordance with applicable law, and the faculty or staff member or student will be notified whether the exception has been granted.

(c) *Religious Belief.* Any faculty or staff member or student requesting an exception due to a deeply held religious belief must provide a personal statement that identifies such belief and explains how it inhibits their ability to get vaccinated. A faculty or staff member seeking a religious exception should submit this statement to the Office of Human Resources via this link—[Faculty & Staff Non-Medical Vaccine Exception Requests](#). A student seeking a religious exception should submit this documentation to the Center for Disability Resources via this link—[Student Non-Medical Vaccine Exception Requests](#). The documentation will be reviewed in accordance with applicable law, and the faculty or staff member or student will be notified whether the exception has been granted.

(d) RESERVED

(e) *Requirements Applicable to Individuals Not Fully Vaccinated.* Faculty and staff members, as a requirement of continued employment, and students, as a requirement of continued enrollment, receiving a vaccination exception (including booster) may be required to participate in increased levels of COVID-19 testing as and when determined by the university. Further, consistent with CDC and state and city public health guidance, persons who are immunocompromised should wear face coverings when in any setting where others may not be fully vaccinated; in any event, such persons are advised to discuss with their healthcare provider what protections they should take.

Faculty and staff who are not Fully Vaccinated and need assistance in facilitating their ability to practice, to the extent practicable, physical distancing should contact the Office of Human

Resources (hr@iit.edu). Students who are not Fully Vaccinated and need assistance in facilitating their ability to practice, to the extent practicable, physical distancing should contact the Office of the Vice Provost of Student Affairs (dos@iit.edu). Such requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to determine if reasonable options, which are neither burdensome nor disruptive to operations, exist for such facilitation.

VI. Positive Test, Close Contact, Exhibiting Symptoms

The university follows current [CDC guidance](#) on isolation in the event of a positive COVID-19 test or exposure as a result of close contact, as supplemented herein.

(a) *Positive Test.* Faculty, staff, and students who test positive for COVID-19 should not come to work or class and must isolate for at least five days. You may end isolation based on the severity of your symptoms. Individuals who do not exhibit symptoms (asymptomatic) may end isolation after five days from the date of the positive test result or upon receipt of a negative test. Individuals with mild symptoms may end isolation after day five if they are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) and symptoms are improving. Individuals with more severe illness should continue to isolate through day ten, and may end isolation if symptoms are gone or resolving and are fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications after ten days. Both symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals should continue to wear a mask through day ten. If a fever is not resolved and/or no other symptoms have improved on day five, such individuals should continue to self-isolate until symptoms are improving and fever-free for 24 hours.

(b) *Close Contact.* Faculty, staff, and students are not required to isolate after close contact exposure unless they develop symptoms, but should wear a mask for ten days after the date of exposure. Such individuals shall submit a test result for COVID-19 taken at least five full days after the last date of exposure. Close contact is someone who was less than six feet away from an infected person (laboratory-confirmed or a clinical diagnosis) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.

(c) *Exhibiting Symptoms.* Faculty, staff, and students who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should not come to work or class and must isolate. Such individuals should continue to isolate until they are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and other symptoms have improved. They should continue to wear a mask through day ten. Such individuals shall submit a test result for COVID-19 taken at least five full days after the date of symptom onset.

VII. Symptoms Monitoring

All faculty, staff, and students are urged to perform daily health screenings for infectious illnesses, including COVID-19. The CDC's list of current COVID-19 symptoms can be found at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html. Those with signs or symptoms of infectious illness should stay home and contact their health care provider to determine whether to seek testing or medical care.

VIII. Contractors and Visitors

Any contractor or visitor to the campuses is strongly encouraged to be Fully Vaccinated against COVID-19. Any contractor or visitor to the campuses must comply with all currently effective and applicable federal, state, and municipal requirements, as well as relevant university policies and procedures, concerning the use of a face covering in any shared indoor settings and must maintain, to the extent practicable, six feet of physical distance in indoor settings.

IX. Policy Modification and Compliance with Law

(a) Because public health guidelines and business and industry best practices regarding COVID-19 and COVID-19 vaccines can change as new information becomes available, the university reserves the right to modify this policy at any time in its sole discretion to respond to changing circumstances and needs.

(b) Nothing in this policy is intended to relieve, and shall not be deemed to relieve, any faculty or staff member or student from complying with any applicable COVID-19 related requirement of any governmental body that exists, or may be imposed or adopted in the future, including, but not limited, CDC and City of Chicago travel requirements and restrictions.