

## **Kern Community College District Q&A For Vaccine Requirement**

Updated: August 23, 2021

Prepared by the districtwide COVID team

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### **Section I – Vaccinations**

#### **A. Why is the District requiring students and employees to be vaccinated if the FDA has not fully approved at least one of the vaccines?**

The District is committed to providing a safe and healthy learning and working environment for students and employees. COVID protocols have previously been established to ensure cooperation with local public health officials to prevent and control the spread of communicable diseases. The tools available to combat the COVID-19 pandemic have evolved dramatically, including the development, approval, distribution, and broad availability of COVID-19 vaccines. Research shows that people who have not been vaccinated against COVID-19 are most at risk of infection, adverse health consequences, and further spreading COVID-19, including the highly transmissible Delta Variant, to friends, family, colleagues, and the community at large. Research also shows that the overwhelming majority of serious illness, hospitalizations, and death resulting from COVID-19, including the Delta Variant, are among the unvaccinated.

Consistent with recommendations and directives from the State of California and the federal government, the Board of Trustees at the August 12, 2021 Board meeting directed the Chancellor or designee to take any and all actions necessary to develop and implement a COVID-19 vaccine requirement for District employees, students, and others who access District facilities at any District location.

The Vaccine Requirement will be developed consistent with applicable legal requirements, including exceptions for medical conditions and sincerely held religious belief.

#### **B. When will students and employees be required to show proof of vaccination?**

All students and employees will be required to provide proof of first vaccination (or the single dose Janssen vaccine from Johnson & Johnson) unless they have requested and been granted a religious or medical exemption by September 7, 2021. By November 1, all students and employees must show proof of full vaccination.

### **C. What does it mean to be fully vaccinated?**

In general, people are considered fully vaccinated:

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

### **D. How do I report that I am fully vaccinated?**

Proof of vaccination (vaccine card or other documentation) is required. Follow the steps to upload proof of vaccination located in the KCCD Campus Pass App. During this process, you will also need to accept the Confidentiality of Medical Information Act (CMIA) statement. CMIA prohibits disclosing medical information regarding a patient, enrollee, or subscriber without first obtaining an authorization. Your vaccination information will be secure and held confidentially by the District.

### **E. How are we confirming vaccination cards are legitimate?**

Trained staff will review the uploaded vaccination cards. If staff has a question or concerns about the card, they may reach out to the card holder to review the card in person or review the card in the state-wide database. The Response Teams will spot check vaccination cards as needed.

### **F. How do I report proof of vaccination if I lost my vaccine card?**

The State of California offers a digital COVID-19 vaccine portal. The portal provides a digital copy of your vaccine record. If you received your vaccination from a federal agency (e.g., Department of Defense, Indian Health Services, or Veterans Affairs), you will need to reach out to those agencies for assistance with your vaccination record. You may request a digital COVID-19 vaccine record [through the California Department of Public Health](#). Once received, follow the steps to upload proof of vaccination in the Campus Pass App to receive your Blue Card.

One may also go to the [Digital COVID-19 Vaccine Record](#) and follow these steps:

- Fill out your first name, last name, and date of birth
- Check "Cell Phone" or "Email" and enter the cell phone number or email address you used when filling out your vaccine paperwork. If you do not recall which cell phone number or email address you used, you attempt with multiple numbers and addresses.
- Choose a 4-digit code that you will use to retrieve your vaccine record. This is a new code, not something you previously gave to the vaccine site. Make sure you write it down.
- Read the legal disclosure and check it if you agree
- If the process was successful, you will receive a link by text or email; if the process was not successful try again with a different phone number or email.

Click the link and input your 4-digit code to receive information on how to get your new digital record.

**G. Are all employees required to be vaccinated?**

Yes. All employees who come to district owned properties or facilities must provide proof of vaccination or submit a request for exemption. Employees who never come to district owned facilities may be an exception to this requirement. For those employees, please contact your campus Human Resources Department.

**H. If I am partially vaccinated, can I be on campus prior to September 7, 2021?**

Yes. You will be required to wear a mask and observe COVID-19 safety precautions such as frequent hand washing and maintaining social distancing.

**I. What happens if I am not fully vaccinated and do not meet the requirements of an exemption by the vaccination requirement deadline?**

Please contact the Human Resources department and they will work with you to determine a solution for your unique circumstance. This is a confidential process. Please email [covid19@kccd.edu](mailto:covid19@kccd.edu).

**J. Will students who are only taking online classes need to be vaccinated?**

No. However, to maximize protection from COVID-19 and prevent possibly spreading it to others, all individuals are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated. If you choose to come to campus, you will need to be vaccinated.

**K. I am pregnant. Do I have to be vaccinated?**

COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for all people 12 years and older, including people who are pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to get pregnant now, or who might become pregnant in the future. [New data from the CDC released on August 11](#) suggests that vaccines are safe during pregnancy. Again, feel free to contact the Human Resources department and they will work with you to determine a solution for your unique circumstance. This is a confidential process. Please email [covid19@kccd.edu](mailto:covid19@kccd.edu).

**L. How can students and employees get vaccinated?**

The BC Student Health and Wellness Center administers the Moderna COVID vaccine and the Johnson and Johnson Janssen COVID vaccine. Visit the [Visit the BC Vaccine Clinic website](#) for additional information.

Porterville College will be offering multiple vaccination clinics on campus in partnership with Sierra Medical Center, Imperial Ambulance, and Kaweah Medical over the next few months. [Visit the PC website](#) for upcoming dates and times.

Cerro Coso Community College will be offering multiple vaccinations clinics on campus in partnership with Ridgecrest Regional Hospital. [Visit the CC website](#) for upcoming dates and times.

Register at [myturn.ca.gov](https://myturn.ca.gov) or call (833) 422-4255 and schedule your appointment for a clinic in the community.

#### **M. How is my information protected?**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law enacted in 1974 that protects the privacy of student education records. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 or HIPAA is a federal law to protect sensitive patient health information from being disclosed without the patient's consent or knowledge. The HIPAA Privacy Rule is to ensure that individuals' health information is properly protected while allowing the flow of health information needed to provide and promote high quality health care and to protect the public's health and well-being. It is not a HIPAA violation for an organization to ask any individual for proof of COVID-19 vaccination.

Before you upload your proof of vaccination, you will be asked to execute an authorization under the Confidentiality of Medical Information Act (CMIA). This authorizes the District to receive, store, and use the vaccination information in implementing the vaccine requirement.

## **Section II - Exemptions**

#### **A. Can employees request an exemption to the vaccination?**

Yes. Employees may request a medical or religious exemption to the COVID-19 vaccine requirement. The exemptions will be approved by HR.

The [medical exemption form can be found here](#).

The [religious exemption form for sincerely held religious belief can be found here](#).

Requests can also be made through the KCCD Campus Pass App.

Again, please contact Human Resources or members of your campus COVID team to discuss your special circumstance. Submit your exemption request form to the following email address associated with the campus where you work.

- District HR: [covid19@kccd.edu](mailto:covid19@kccd.edu)
- Bakersfield College: [covid19@bakersfieldcollege.edu](mailto:covid19@bakersfieldcollege.edu)
- Porterville College: [covid19@portervillecollege.edu](mailto:covid19@portervillecollege.edu)
- Cerro Coso College: [covid19@cerrocoso.edu](mailto:covid19@cerrocoso.edu)

**B. How can students request an exemption?**

Students who wish to request a medical or religious exemption from the COVID-19 vaccination must complete and submit a medical or religious exemption form and have their request approved by their campus Covid Team.

The [medical exemption form can be found here](#).

The [religious exemption form for sincerely held religious belief can be found here](#).

Students, please contact your campus COVID team to discuss your special circumstance. Submit your exemption request form to the following email address associated with the campus where you attend school.

- BC students → Student Health and Wellness Center. You can also email [covid19@bakersfieldcollege.edu](mailto:covid19@bakersfieldcollege.edu).
- CC students → Safety and Security Office. You can also email [covid19@cerrocoso.edu](mailto:covid19@cerrocoso.edu).
- PC students → Health and Wellness Coordinator. You can also email [covid19@portervillecollege.edu](mailto:covid19@portervillecollege.edu)

**C. What type of supporting documentation is needed to request a medical exemption?**

The only document that needs to be submitted is the Medical Exemption Form signed by a medical provider.

**D. What type of supporting documentation is needed to request a religious exemption?**

The only document that needs to be submitted is the Religious Exemption Request form.

**E. If I have an exemption am I subject to weekly testing?**

Yes, if you are accessing a district facility.

If you have an approved exemption, you must test weekly and provide negative COVID test results to a designated party in order to access a district facility.

**F. What happens if I have an exemption, am testing weekly and I receive a positive test?**

If you receive a positive test, you will quarantine for 10 days while your response team conducts a contact tracing investigation to mitigate any other potential infections.

If you have questions please contact the following:

- Employees: notify your campus HR. You can also email [covid19@kccd.edu](mailto:covid19@kccd.edu)
- Students:
  1. BC - Health and Wellness Center
  2. CC - Safety and Security Office
  3. PC - Health and Wellness Coordinator

**Section III – Masks**

**A. Do I have to wear a mask?**

Yes. Currently CDC guidelines require all individuals on District property to wear masks regardless of vaccination status.

**B. Will I be required to wear a mask if I'm fully vaccinated?**

Yes. To maximize protection from the Delta variant and prevent possibly spreading it to others while on KCCD premises, all employees are required to wear a mask while indoors.

**Section IV – Testing**

**A. How can students and employees get tested?**

Any employee or student with an approved medical or religious exemption is required to test at least weekly. All those without an approved medical or religious exemption are required to get a vaccination. If one wishes to test, following are the various options for testing for each campus:

BC Employees and students can get a free COVID test done at the BC Student Health and Wellness Center by calling ahead (661-395-4336) and making an appointment.

PC Employees and students can view a list of free testing sites at the [County of Tulare website](#).

CC Employees and students can test at Rural Health Clinic Urgent Care on 111 N. China Lake Blvd. in Ridgecrest.

The District Office employees can get a free COVID test done at the BC Student Health and Wellness Center.

A list of COVID-19 testing sites in Kern County is available on the [Department of Public Health website](#).

## **Section V – Athletics**

### **A. What are KCCD athletic programs doing in response to COVID-19?**

All KCCD athletic teams are governed by the California Community College Athletic Association (CCCAA). Bakersfield College and Cerro Coso Community College began competing in the Spring 2020-21 semester. All Fall 2020-21 sport programs were pushed into the Spring semester in conjunction with Spring sport programs. In order to compete in any sport, all athletes and department personnel were required to be tested weekly and within 48 hours of any intercollegiate competition.

As of Fall 2021-22, 100% of all athletic department personnel and athletes must be tested weekly unless the athlete is vaccinated. If an athlete or department personnel is vaccinated, there is no testing requirement unless that person becomes symptomatic.

## **Section VI - KCCD Campus Pass Application**

### **A. How do I get the app?**

Download the KCCD Campus Pass App from the Apple or Google Play stores onto your smartphone. If you do not have a smartphone, you can use [the web-based forms](#) for the next steps. [iOS app Download](#) & [Android/Google App Download](#)

### **B. What if I don't have a smartphone or can't download the app?**

You will still need to complete the Daily Health Checker form on your computer before coming onto campus via the [web-based form](#) located on the campus's homepage. Complete this web-based form to receive your campus pass.

## **Section VII - Miscellaneous**

### **A. May I travel for professional development or other work-related responsibilities this Fall?**

Please follow your campus guidelines for travel.

If work-related travel must happen, then all safety protocols must be followed. All safety precautions and requirements at work also apply to where you travel, including but not limited to wearing a mask indoors regardless of your vaccination status, taking time to wash and sanitize your hands, quarantining for 10 days if you have COVID-19 symptoms, and reporting a COVID-19 illness to your supervisor.

**B. What are the consequences of non-compliance for students?**

Non-compliance will be treated the same as any other non-compliance issue and will be subject to action under the Student Code of Conduct.

The colleges will work with individual students who are non-compliant with the practice to find a resolution. If the issue cannot be resolved, then non-compliance will be treated the same as any other non-compliance issue and will be subject to action under the Student Code of Conduct.

Students who choose not to be vaccinated and who do not receive an approved exemption or a deferral, or who refuse to be tested will not meet KCCD's health and safety conditions for attending in-person classes, events, or access to campus will be subject to action under the Student Code of Conduct.

**C. What are the consequences of non-compliance for employees?**

Non-compliance will be treated the same as any other non-compliance issue and will be subject to action under the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Human Resources will work with individual employees who are non-compliant with the practice to find a resolution. If the issue cannot be resolved, then non-compliance will be treated the same as any other non-compliance issue and will be subject to action under the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Employees who choose not to be vaccinated and who do not receive an approved exemption or a deferral, or who refuse to be tested will not meet KCCD's health and safety conditions for face to face in-person work will be subject to corrective action under the collective bargaining agreements.

**D. What is the policy for visitors coming onto campus?**

Visitors are short-term guests on campus. We are in the process of developing protocols for short-term guests for each of our campuses. At this time, visitors are required to wear a mask through the duration of their visit to campus. The office or department where short-term guests visit is responsible for having short-term guests complete the Daily Health Checker web-based form for contact tracing.



