

COVID-19 Vaccine Requirement FAQ

1. Why is Kettering Health requiring COVID-19 vaccination for all employees, providers, volunteers, and business partners?

As a healthcare organization, the safety of our patients, staff, and providers is one of our highest priorities. More than 330 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccines have now been given in the United States, and the science is clear: the vaccines are highly effective at preventing infection, hospitalization, and death. This efficacy rivals that of the best vaccines ever developed. In addition, the side effects are generally mild and short-lived. Currently, we are seeing a surge of COVID-19 in our region, caused by the Delta variant.

The Ohio Hospital Association has recommended that all hospital employees be vaccinated. The same recommendation has been made by more than 50 professional societies, including the Infectious Diseases Society of America and the Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America. Many other healthcare networks have stepped up and made this same decision. This decision helps us protect one another's safety and well-being while carrying out our mission: to improve the quality of life of the people in the communities we serve.

2. Is it legal to make employees get a COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes, it is. State and federal employment laws allow employers to require vaccines. The U.S. Department of Justice also recently published an opinion stating that federal law permits vaccine mandates. Kettering Health and other hospitals across the country already require vaccinations for other highly communicable diseases, like the flu, as a condition of employment.

3. Why is Kettering Health requiring the vaccination before any of the vaccines have full U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval?

Vaccination against COVID-19 protects you and everyone around you: your team, your family, your friends, your patients, your community. The scientific evidence as well as real-world experiences show that the COVID-19 vaccines are both safe and effective against symptomatic infections, hospitalizations, and death. The COVID-19 vaccine saves lives and, as a healthcare organization, we must do all we can to protect our teams and our communities.

4. (UPDATED August 13, 2021) If I've already had COVID-19 and have antibodies, am I required to get vaccinated?

No. However, according to the latest CDC guidance, individuals with a prior COVID-19 infection should still be vaccinated. Immunity from vaccination will be more long-term than what would naturally follow after having COVID-19. Though immunity does occur after infection, we don't know how long it lasts.

For those who wish to be exempt from the COVID-19 vaccine requirement based on a previous COVID-19 infection, we will accept proof of current immunity in the form of a positive COVID-19 IgG antibody test, conducted within 90 days of their exemption request.

For exemptions to be extended, a positive antibody test must be submitted no less than every 90 days to the Employee Health office at EHprograms@ketteringhealth.org. When the antibody test becomes negative, a vaccine series must be completed. Please note, antibody tests are paid out-of-pocket.

5. If masks and social distancing work, why do I have to get vaccinated?

Safety precautions and vaccines all help protect you from COVID-19, but they work in different ways. The vaccine helps prepare your immune system to fight the COVID-19 virus if you're exposed to it. Masks and social distancing help limit your exposure and lower the chance of you spreading the virus. To end the pandemic, we need to use all the tools available.

6. I've heard some people still get COVID-19 after being vaccinated. Why should I get a vaccine that doesn't work?

All of the COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective. Pfizer's vaccine is proven to be 95% effective, Moderna's vaccine is 94% effective, and Johnson & Johnson's vaccine is 72% effective. Typically, when a vaccine—the flu vaccine, for example—is 50% to 60% effective, it is considered successfully protective.

7. I work remotely. Why do I need to be vaccinated?

Employees that do not directly care for patients may still interact with employees that do. Also, as we did last year, we may need to ask an employee in any role to provide support at our healthcare facilities to ensure we are able to care for our patients. It's vital that we all do everything we can to protect each other as well as our communities and end the pandemic.

8. (UPDATED August 13, 2021) Will I lose my job if I don't get vaccinated?

Those who do not meet the COVID-19 vaccine requirement by Wednesday, December 1 will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination and/or lose their ability to conduct business at our facilities.

9. (UPDATED August 10, 2021) How do I submit proof of my vaccination status if Kettering Health's records show that I have not received the COVID-19 vaccine?

Employees, medical staff and volunteers who are contacted by their leader about their vaccination status because our records show they have not received the COVID-19 vaccine should email a copy of their vaccination card or other documentation from their healthcare provider to the Employee Health office at ehprograms@ketteringhealth.org.

10. What if I lost my CDC vaccination card or other proof I was vaccinated?

If you received your vaccine through a healthcare provider and were registered for its patient portal, your vaccine record may be available through your account. If you were vaccinated at a retailer such as Kroger Health Little Clinic or CVS, contact them to request a copy. You may also contact the Ohio Department of Health for a copy, as it maintains a vaccination information system.

11. (UPDATED August 10, 2021) Do I need to submit proof of vaccination if I receive or received my vaccine from a Kettering Health vaccine clinic?

Employees, medical staff and volunteers who are contacted by their leader about their vaccination status because our records show they have not received the COVID-19 vaccine should email a copy of their vaccination card or other documentation from their healthcare provider to the Employee Health office at ehprograms@ketteringhealth.org. Likewise, employees, medical staff and volunteers who are not vaccinated but get the COVID-19 vaccine in the future will need to email a copy of their vaccination card to the Employee Health office at ehprograms@ketteringhealth.org regardless where they get the COVID-19 vaccine.

12. Can I be exempt from having to get the vaccine?

Yes, Kettering Health will review exemption requests submitted by individuals who are precluded from getting the vaccine for medical reasons or sincerely held religious beliefs. Such requests will be granted where legally required and supporting documentation may be required. Note: Individuals who qualify for such exemptions may be required to undergo additional testing and/or screening. Exemption request forms are available, and [can be accessed by clicking here](#). Exemption requests must be received by October 15. If you have questions about how to complete these forms, please contact your campus Employee Health department.

13. (UPDATED August 13, 2021) If I'm pregnant, can I receive a temporary exemption?

Yes. We are allowing pregnant women to request a temporary exemption.

Kettering Health, the CDC, and the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology recommend pregnant women be vaccinated against COVID-19 because they are at risk for more severe illness. We understand that some of our team members who are pregnant may still have concerns. These team members may submit a medical exemption form and there is an option to request a temporary exemption of the COVID-19 vaccine with confirmation of pregnancy and due date from the provider. Following completion of the pregnancy, individuals must receive all required doses of the COVID-19 vaccine within 30 days after their first postpartum appointment or within 30 days of their return from maternity leave, whichever date is later.

14. (UPDATED August 13, 2021) If I'm breastfeeding, can I request a temporary exemption?

Yes, women who are breastfeeding may request a temporary exemption, subject to renewal every 90 days. However, the vaccine is strongly encouraged for your protection.

Note: the vaccine does not contain a live virus and does not shed in breast milk.

15. (UPDATED August 13, 2021) If I'm trying to conceive, can I request a temporary exemption?

Yes, women who are trying to conceive may request a temporary exemption, subject to renewal every 90 days. However, the vaccine is strongly encouraged for your protection.

Note: there is no evidence that the vaccines cause female or male fertility problems.

Once a pregnancy is confirmed by a provider, you should follow the process described in FAQ

#13 if they wish to request a temporary exemption of the COVID-19 vaccine based on pregnancy.

16. (UPDATED August 13, 2021) What are the dates I need to be aware of?

Audience	Exemption Request Deadline	Deadline to receive all required doses of the COVID-19 vaccine
Employees	October 15	December 1
Medical Staff – Employed	October 15	December 1
Medical Staff – Non-employed	October 15	December 1
Volunteers	October 15	December 1
Contractors and Vendors	October 15	December 1
Students – Non-Kettering College	October 15	December 1
Students – Kettering College	October 15	December 1

17. Do I need to get a certain vaccine brand?

No, you can get any of the COVID-19 vaccines that were approved for emergency use by the FDA. All of the COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective and will help prevent COVID-19—regardless of what kind you get.

18. What does the vaccine cost?

There are no out-of-pocket costs for the COVID-19 vaccine, but insurance will be billed. If you do not have insurance, you still qualify for the vaccine with no out-of-pocket cost. If on Medicare, please be sure to locate and bring your traditional Medicare ID card to your vaccination.

19. (UPDATED August 10, 2021) Is the seasonal flu vaccination still required, too? How, if at all, will the COVID-19 vaccine requirement affect the annual flu vaccine campaign?

Yes, Kettering Health team members are required to receive the flu vaccine, or have an approved medical or religious exemption, each fall. More details will be available in the coming months about this year’s flu vaccine clinics.

There is no impact of the COVID-19 vaccine mandate on the requirement for all employees to receive their annual flu shot. The CDC does not limit other vaccinations before, with, or after the COVID-19 vaccine. Employees who have an exemption for one vaccine must still apply for an exemption for the other vaccine if they believe they are precluded from being vaccinated for medical or religious reasons.

20. Will I be allowed paid time off to get the vaccine?

If you are a non-exempt/hourly employee, we will provide you with 1 hour of pay for each vaccine appointment you need to attend (1 or 2, depending which vaccine you choose to receive). You should work with your leader to plan for your vaccine appointment, and we ask that you try to schedule that appointment when you are not scheduled to work the following day.

We are also providing that same amount of PTO to non-exempt/hourly employees who have already been vaccinated, as a thank-you for taking that important step to protect our community and to cover any time used for a vaccination appointment.

21. (UPDATED August 11, 2021) If I experience side effects from the COVID-19 vaccine and can't come to work, will I receive paid time off?

Employees are encouraged to receive the vaccine when they will be off the next day to minimize the need to call off related to a vaccine reaction. Employees should report the absence to their department using normal call-in procedures and call their campus Employee Health office to report the reaction. If employees are unable to perform their job duties because of a reaction to the COVID-19 vaccine, they should take PTO for scheduled hours missed. If an individual does not have PTO hours, Kettering Health will cover up to one shift based on the reaction.

22. If my employment is terminated for not complying with this policy, and I later change my mind, am I eligible for rehire?

Yes, if you become vaccinated against COVID-19, you are eligible for rehire. You will not be guaranteed your previous position, but you can apply to open positions.

23. I'm under the age of 18. Do I need parental consent to receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes, if you are under the age of 18, a parent or guardian must complete a consent form that you'll receive before being vaccinated. Currently, minors are eligible to receive only the Pfizer vaccine.

24. Are all Kettering Health locations requiring vaccination?

Yes, the COVID-19 vaccine is required for all employees, employed medical staff, volunteers, contractors, vendors, and students—regardless of work location.

25. Where can I learn more about the vaccine?

Learn all about COVID-19 vaccines and vaccination planning in the United States and Ohio.

- [CDC General COVID-19 Vaccine Information](#)
- [FDA COVID-19 Vaccine Information](#)
- [Ohio Department of Health COVID-19 Vaccine Information](#)
- [Pfizer Coronavirus Vaccine](#)
- [Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine](#)
- [Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 Vaccine](#)

26. (UPDATED August 13, 2021) Will new hires have to be vaccinated to be eligible for employment at Kettering Health?

Yes. Anyone hired after December 1 will need to receive their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine within their first week of hire and, within their first 30 days of employment, they must receive all required doses of the vaccine.

27. (UPDATED August 13, 2021) What if I am currently on a leave of absence? Am I required to be vaccinated and, if so, when?

Anyone currently on a leave of absence must receive all required doses of the COVID-19 vaccine by December 1 or within 30 days of their return from leave, whichever date is later.

28. Am I required to get my COVID-19 vaccine at a Kettering Health vaccination clinic?

No. You may get the COVID-19 vaccine wherever you choose, but we will provide you with information and availability to get the COVID-19 vaccine at a Kettering Health vaccination location if that's what works best for you.

(UPDATED August 10, 2021) Employees, volunteers, employed and non-employed medical staff, and those who do business with Kettering Health can [click here](#) to schedule an appointment at our Kettering Health Vaccine Clinic at 2040 Dorothy Lane Ave. in Kettering. This site is open specifically for this group to ensure easy access to the vaccine. Kettering Health On-Demand Care clinics are also offering the COVID-19 vaccine, and appointments can be scheduled at those locations by [clicking here](#).

Note: Appointments for all clinic locations are preferred, but walk-ins are welcome.

If you would prefer getting the vaccine from a non-network clinic, you can find a full list of local COVID-19 vaccine providers by [clicking here](#).

29. (UPDATED August 10, 2021) What should I do if I received my first dose of the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine over 6 weeks ago and I have not received the second dose?

If you have had one dose of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine, you will only need one more dose of the same vaccine to complete the series. If you received the Johnson and Johnson vaccine or will receive the Johnson and Johnson vaccine before December 1 one dose is all that is necessary.

30. (UPDATED August 13, 2021) What should I do if I wish to submit a medical exemption to the COVID-19 vaccine, but I cannot get in to see my doctor and my doctor will not complete the exemption paperwork until after the established exemption request deadline (October 15, 2021)?

Employees who cannot get in to see their doctor and their doctor will not complete the exemption paperwork until after the exemption request deadline should still submit an exemption request and note the date of their appointment, the name of the physician they will be seeing, and the contact information for that physician. If the exemption request is denied, the employee will have 30 days after being notified of the denial (and the completion of any appeals process) to get any required doses of the COVID-19 vaccine.

31. (NEW August 10, 2021) If I receive my first dose of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine and become infected with COVID-19 before my second dose, what should I do?

The second dose should be given on schedule if symptoms have resolved, or it can be delayed up to 90 days from the diagnosis of COVID-19.

32. (NEW August 11, 2021) Are there exclusions for coverage under Kettering Health's benefits plans for claims related to COVID-19 vaccine reactions because the vaccines are only authorized for emergency use by the FDA?

No. Kettering Health's benefit plans (e.g. health, disability and life) do not have exclusions for claims related to adverse reactions to any COVID-19 vaccine on the basis that the vaccines are authorized for emergency use by the FDA.

33. (NEW August 13, 2021) Am I required to have a weekly COVID-19 test if I am granted an exemption?

No. Employees that have an exemption are not currently required to undergo weekly COVID-19 testing.