

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### Vaccination Requirements for City and County of Denver Contractors

The City and County of Denver issued a [Public Health Order](#) on Aug. 2, 2021 requiring all city employees, city contractors and subcontractors, be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by Sept. 30, 2021 in order to limit the spread of the virus in our community.

#### Where can I get vaccinated if I live in Denver?

COVID-19 vaccines are readily available through pharmacies and healthcare partners across the city. All three COVID-19 vaccines are free to all Denver residents, and no insurance or identification are required to receive a COVID-19 vaccine. [More information about the COVID-19 vaccine is available here](#), or you can text your ZIP code to GETVAX (438829) in English, or VACUNA (822862) in Spanish, to get the contact information of three nearby locations with available vaccines.

#### What are the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines?

There may be short-term mild or moderate vaccine reactions that resolve without complication or injury. Some people develop short-lived soreness at the site of the injection. Others develop systemic reactions primarily headache, chills, fatigue or muscle pain or fever lasting for a day or two. Keep in mind that these side effects are indicators that your immune system is responding to the vaccine and are common when receiving vaccines.

#### Which vaccines are FDA-approved?

The Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine has been approved by the FDA for the prevention of COVID-19 disease in individuals 16 years of age and older. The Moderna and Johnson & Johnson vaccines are both approved for emergency use for this same age group. All three vaccines are safe and have been confirmed to meet the Food and Drug Administration's rigorous scientific standards.

The Pfizer vaccine also continues to be available under emergency use authorization for individuals 12 through 15 years of age.

#### How does a city contractor show proof of vaccination?

A person's vaccination card is proof of vaccination. People can also access the Colorado Immunization Information System (CIIS) Public Portal to view and print an official immunization record, which can also serve as proof of vaccination.

### **Who is responsible for enforcing the vaccine mandate?**

Each employer subject to this order must decide how they will enforce this requirement with their employees. Disciplinary action is one of the consequences employers may choose to impose in order to gain compliance, which is the goal of the Public Health Order. Employers should work with their human resources partners to maintain vaccine information. Further, employers are advised to coordinate with their human resources team to provide reasonable accommodations to those eligible for exemptions from the vaccine. Each employer will be responsible for making that determination.

The Denver Department of Public Health & Environment (DDPHE) is the regulatory agency that has enforcement authority over this requirement pursuant to Chapter 24 of the Denver Revised Municipal Code, and vaccination and exemption records must be made available to DDPHE upon request.

Ultimately, the City's goal is to achieve compliance, not to penalize employers. DDPHE is hopeful that impacted employers will work diligently to comply with the order. However, if an organization is out of compliance with the public health order, the City may issue a citation, which could include fines and penalties.

### **How will claims of violation of the vaccine mandate be handled and enforced?**

DDPHE will respond to and investigate any claims of violations of the order as received or as DDPHE becomes aware. DDPHE may also conduct proactive monitoring to assess compliance rates across industries and settings.

### **How will DDPHE track vaccine records, including exemptions, to ensure city contractors are complying with the vaccine mandate?**

DDPHE will investigate violation claims and evaluate the contractor's/subcontractor's records regarding the number of persons it had confirmed were vaccinated or received a medical or religious exemption. DDPHE also will evaluate the number of employees and contractors who still have outstanding records regarding vaccination status.

Medical exemptions must include documentation from a physician indicating that the person should not be vaccinated. Religious exemptions should include a written explanation detailing specifically how sincerely held religious beliefs do not allow for vaccination.

### **How will DDPHE determine if a city contractor(s) is completing the process to comply with the vaccine mandate?**

DDPHE will take a number of factors into consideration to determine if a contractor/subcontractor is in good faith working toward compliance with the vaccine order. Such factors include whether the contractor has gathered records of the vaccination status of their applicable employees by Sept. 30, and whether those employees who are subject to the vaccine mandate but have not yet provided proof of compliance have been advised in writing that they have not yet provided the required information in order facilitate compliance with the Vaccine Order.

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DDPHE will also look to determine if contractors have engaged in an interactive process and compliance plan following the Sept. 30 deadline with any employees subject to the mandate who have not yet provided proof of vaccination or who are unvaccinated and have not been granted an exemption.

**What is required from employers to show they are working towards meeting the vaccine mandate?**

DDPHE will require information from the employer regarding the plan to bring their impacted employees into compliance with the order, including whether those persons are in the process of completing vaccination or obtaining exemptions and whether control measures are implemented to address the potential risk posed by an individual with unresolved vaccination status (e.g. face coverings, distancing, remote work, etc.).

DDPHE will also consider the efforts of the employers with respect to educating employees regarding vaccinations and working with employees to obtain compliance.

Additionally, DDPHE will consider allowing additional time as an individual employer may need to comply with the order, if the employer demonstrates good faith.

**Are the back-office staff with no exposure to client-facing or high-traffic areas e.g. finance or HR operating on contractor property included in the mandate? Is there a difference if the contractor is a listed entity type separate from being a City contractor?**

Yes, the order applies to this type of personnel if they are working for covered entities, or working for a contractor providing services to or on behalf of the City, onsite or in the field.

**Is there a definition of what constitutes onsite and/or in the field? Specifically regarding indoors or outdoors on City property, indoors or outdoors of contractor property, city parks, city streets/sidewalks/ROW, and wastewater waterways. Also, does it matter who holds responsibility for the work being contracted if it is not the City?**

“Onsite” means on City property whether inside or outside. “In the field” means at another location in the City performing work for or on behalf of the City in the community (i.e., while in contact with others vs. strictly virtually or remotely). So it does include parks, ROW, etc. The goal is to ensure vaccination for all who represent the city or do work on behalf of the city.