



**MESA COUNTY  
PUBLIC HEALTH**  
*Working Together for a Healthy Community*



# COVID-19 VACCINATION TOOLKIT FOR BUSINESS

A resource for business owners and organizations to navigate COVID-19 vaccination in the workplace.

# CONTENTS



## COVID VACCINE FAQ

COVID Vaccine frequently asked questions, including myth de-bunking.



## TALKING WITH YOUR STAFF ABOUT VACCINE STATUS

Guidance on requiring vaccines for your business and what you can/cannot ask of your employees regarding their vaccination status.



## MAKING INFORMED DECISIONS

Decision charts addressing guidance for vaccinated and unvaccinated employees if they are exposed to COVID-19, face covering expectations, and travel recommendations.



## VACCINE INFORMATION SHEET

A one-pager to share with your staff that includes vaccination clinic details, scheduling a vaccine clinic for your organization, and employee info sessions at your worksite.



## COVID TESTING RESOURCES

A one-pager to share with your staff with COVID testing resources and information.



## COVID STANDARDS TEMPLATE

A 'COVID-19 Standards' template that you can customize for your organization.





# EMPLOYER VACCINE GUIDANCE

Availability of the COVID-19 vaccine raises questions under the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) laws, including Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Rehabilitation Act, etc.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### CAN I ASK MY STAFF TO PROVIDE PROOF OF VACCINATION?

Yes, employers can ask employees to bring in documentation or other confirmation of vaccination. However, an employer should not ask the reason why an employee is not vaccinated, as this question may elicit information about a disability ([K.4.](#)).

Employers requiring proof of vaccination may want to advise employees not to provide any additional medical information. Employers must keep an employee's vaccination information, similar to all other medical information, confidential and stored separately from the employee's personnel files ([K.6.](#)).

### WHAT STEPS SHOULD AN EMPLOYER TAKE IF AN EMPLOYEE DOES NOT OR CANNOT COMPLY WITH VACCINE POLICIES?

If an employee is unable to meet the vaccination requirement, due to a disability or sincerely held religious belief, the employer may not require compliance for that employee unless the employer can demonstrate that an unvaccinated employee would pose a direct threat, which is defined as a "significant risk of substantial harm to the health or safety of the individual or others that cannot be eliminated or reduced by reasonable accommodation" under [29 C.F.R. section 1630.2\(r\)](#).

If there is a direct threat that cannot be reduced to an acceptable level, the employer can exclude the employee from physically entering the workplace. This does not mean the employer may automatically terminate the worker. Employers must determine if any other rights apply under the EEO laws or other federal, state, and local authorities. For example, if an employer excludes an employee based on an inability to accommodate a request to be exempt from a vaccination requirement, the employee may be entitled to reasonable accommodations ([K.5.](#)).

### WHAT STEPS SHOULD AN EMPLOYER TAKE IF AN ASSESSMENT DEMONSTRATES AN UNVACCINATED EMPLOYEE POSES A "SIGNIFICANT RISK OF SUBSTANTIAL HARM" TO THEMSELVES OR OTHERS?

If an assessment demonstrates that an unvaccinated employee with a disability or sincerely held religious belief would pose a "direct threat" to self or others, the employer must consider whether providing a reasonable accommodation, absent undue hardship, would reduce or eliminate that threat.

As a best practice, employers who are introducing COVID-19 vaccination policies should notify all employees that they will consider requests for reasonable accommodation, due to disability or closely held religious belief, on an individual basis ([K.5.](#) & [29 C.F.R. section 1630.2\(r\)](#)).

### HOW DO I DETERMINE IF AN UNVACCINATED EMPLOYEE POSES A "SIGNIFICANT RISK OF SUBSTANTIAL HARM" TO THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE WORKPLACE?

An employer must make an individualized assessment to determine if an unvaccinated employee poses a "direct threat" in the workplace. This assessment should present an employee's ability to safely perform essential job functions. Factors making up this assessment are:

- Level of community spread
- Duration of risk
- Nature and severity of potential harm
- Likelihood that potential harm will occur
- Imminence of potential harm
- Type of work environment, taking into consideration:
  - Employee's frequency and duration of direct interaction with other employees/non-employees.
  - Ventilation.
  - Inside vs. outside work.
  - Number of partially or fully vaccinated individuals in the workplace.
  - Space available for social distancing.
  - Whether mask wearing or routine screening testing is occurring in the workplace.

Determination of a potential "significant risk of substantial harm" should be based on reasonable medical judgement that relies on the most current medical knowledge about COVID-19. ([K.5.](#)) Statements from the CDC can also be used as a resource of current medical knowledge about COVID-19. Follow the [link](#) for more information on this topic.

### CAN I REQUIRE A COVID-19 VACCINATION FOR ALL EMPLOYEES ENTERING THE WORKPLACE WITHOUT VIOLATING THE ADA, TITLE VII, AND OTHER FEDERAL NONDISCRIMINATION LAWS?

Yes, the federal EEO laws do not prevent employers from requiring COVID-19 vaccinations for all employees physically entering the workplace. Additionally, the ADA allows an employer to have a qualification standard that includes "a requirement that an individual shall not pose a direct threat to the health or safety of individuals in the workplace" if the standard is "job-related and consistent with business necessity" ([K.1.](#)).

In some circumstances, unless it would pose undue hardship on the operation of an organization, Title VII and the ADA require an employer to provide reasonable accommodations for employees who, due to a disability or sincerely held religious belief, practice, or observance, do not get vaccinated for COVID-19 ([K.1.](#) & [K.5.](#)).

## WHAT IS CONSIDERED "UNDUE HARDSHIP?"

Courts have defined "undue hardship" under Title VII as having more than a de minimis cost or burden on the employer. Analysis for undue hardship depends on whether the accommodation request is for religion or a disability.

## CAN AN EMPLOYEE REQUEST RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION FROM VACCINE POLICIES?

Yes, EEOC guidance explains that due to the protected status and broad definition of religion, an employer should ordinarily assume that an employee's request for religious accommodation is based on a sincerely held religious belief. If, however, an employee requests religious accommodation, and an employer has an objective basis for questioning either the religious nature or the sincerity of a particular belief, practice, or observance, the employer would be justified in requesting additional supporting information ([K.12](#), 29 CFR 1605).

## WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS?

Employees who do not get vaccinated due to a disability (under the ADA), pregnancy (under Title VII) or sincerely held religious belief, practice, or observance (under Title VII) may be entitled to reasonable accommodation, unless it would pose undue hardship on the operation of an employer's business, under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act.

The EEOC provides a few examples of reasonable accommodations for unvaccinated employees entering the workplace ([K.2](#)):

- Wearing a face mask.
- Working while social distanced from staff and other non-employees.
- Working modified shifts where in-person contact is limited.
- Safety enhancements to the work environment such as improving ventilation systems.
- Periodically receiving testing for COVID-19.
- Given the opportunity to telework if feasible.
- Reassignment of duties.

Under the ADA, it is unlawful for an employer to disclose that an employee is receiving [reasonable accommodation](#) or to [retaliate against an employee](#) for requesting an accommodation.

## MAY I OFFER INCENTIVES TO MY STAFF FOR GETTING VACCINATED?

Yes, requesting proof that an employee received a COVID-19 vaccination is not a disability-related inquiry under the ADA. For this reason, an employer may offer incentives to employees who choose to voluntarily provide confirmation receiving vaccination.

## WHAT STEPS SHOULD I TAKE BEFORE INITIATING A VACCINE POLICY IN MY FACILITY?

Employers who are considering implementing a vaccine policy should provide managers and supervisors with clear information on how to respond to an accommodation request and ensure they understand how to recognize an accommodation request from an employee with a disability. Below is a list of helpful resources to consult when considering a vaccination requirement.

- [Guidance to recognizing an accommodation request from an employee with a disability](#).
- Consult the [Job Accommodation Network \(JAN\)](#) website as a resource for different types of accommodations.
- Review JAN's materials about COVID-19: <https://askjan.org/topics/COVID-19.cfm>
- [Occupational Safety and Health Administration \(OSHA\) COVID-specific resources](#)

## FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS TOPIC, PLEASE VISIT

<https://www.eeoc.gov/wysk/what-you-should-know-about-covid-19-and-ada-rehabilitation-act-and-other-eeo-laws>.



**If you have any questions** or need further assistance navigating COVID-19 vaccination in the workplace, please reach out to us at [5Star@mesacounty.us](mailto:5Star@mesacounty.us)

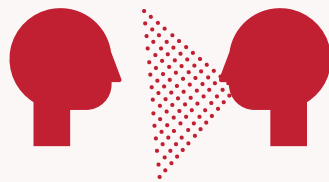


# MAKING INFORMED DECISIONS

Use the following Decision Charts to guide actions for vaccinated versus unvaccinated employees regarding COVID exposure, face coverings, and travel.

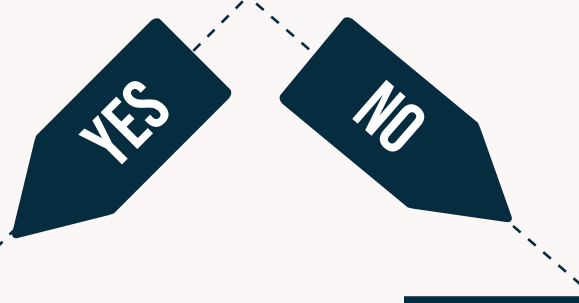
## SCENARIO 1: EXPOSED TO COVID-19

I was identified as a close contact of a known COVID-19 positive individual (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes). What should I do?



### ARE YOU FULLY VACCINATED?

Fully vaccinated means that it has been at least 15 days since your final dose of COVID-19 vaccine.



**YES**

You do **not** need to quarantine.  
Please **monitor for symptoms for 14 days** from your most recent exposure.  
If you **develop symptoms**, isolate at home and consider being tested.

**NO**

It is important that you **quarantine for 10 days**.  
There is an option to **end quarantine early on day 8**. To qualify for this option, you need a negative molecular or antigen test on day 6 or later, following your high-risk exposure.  
With a negative result, you can end quarantine on day 8 (and continue to monitor for symptoms through day 14).

## SCENARIO 2: FACE COVERINGS

Do I need to be wearing a face covering while I am at work?



### ARE YOU FULLY VACCINATED?

Fully vaccinated means that it has been at least 15 days since your final dose of COVID-19 vaccine.



**YES**

You do not need to wear a face covering unless required by federal, state, business, or workplace rules.

Whether you are vaccinated or not, you are still encouraged to do **self-monitor for any symptoms and stay home from work if you are sick.**

**NO**

You **must wear a face covering** while interacting with colleagues and customers indoors.

## SCENARIO 3: TRAVEL

I want to travel. What is the guidance for that?



### ARE YOU FULLY VACCINATED?

Fully vaccinated means that it has been at least 15 days since your final dose of COVID-19 vaccine.

YES

NO

YES

You can **travel safely** within the United States and you **do not need to self-quarantine after traveling.**

Upon return, you should **self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms**; isolate and get tested **if** you develop symptoms.

For [international travel](#), the CDC recommends a PCR or molecular test **3-5 days after travel.**

NO

You should get **tested with a PCR or molecular test 3-5 days after travel AND stay home and self-quarantine for a full 7 days after travel even if you test negative.**

- If your test is positive, isolate yourself to protect others from getting infected.
- If you don't get tested, stay home and self-quarantine for 10 days after travel.
- Avoid being around people who are at increased risk for severe illness, for 14 days, whether you get tested or not.
- Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms; isolate and get tested if you develop symptoms.



# YOUR COVID-19 VACCINE IS WAITING FOR YOU!

**There are three COVID-19 vaccines available in Mesa County: Pfizer, Moderna, or Johnson & Johnson. Anyone age 12 or older is eligible for at least one of these vaccines.**

All three vaccines, the Moderna, Pfizer and Johnson & Johnson (J&J), have these things in common:

- They are extremely effective at preventing severe disease.
- They were extensively reviewed by a safety board and the FDA.
- You can NOT get COVID-19 from any of the vaccines.
- None of the vaccines contain preservatives like mercury, eggs, gelatin, or latex.
- None of the vaccines cause infertility.
- None of the vaccines contain microchips.

## PFIZER

Pfizer is approved for ages 12 and older.

Vaccine does not contain any actual virus. You can NOT get COVID-19 from this vaccine.

Requires 2 doses, you need to get the two doses of the SAME vaccine.

Pfizer- your second dose is given 3 weeks after you get your first dose.

You are considered "fully vaccinated" 2 weeks after receiving your second dose of either the Pfizer vaccine.

This vaccine delivers a small piece of genetic material called mRNA into the cell.

## MODERNA

Moderna is approved for ages 18 and older.

Vaccine does not contain any actual virus. You can NOT get COVID-19 from this vaccine.

Requires 2 doses, you need to get the two doses of the SAME vaccine.

Your second dose is given 4 weeks after your first dose.

You are considered "fully vaccinated" 2 weeks after receiving your second dose of either the Moderna vaccine.

This vaccine delivers a small piece of genetic material called mRNA into the cell.

## JOHNSON & JOHNSON/ JANSSEN VACCINE

J&J is approved for ages 18 and older.

This vaccine contains an inactivated adenovirus that can NOT replicate or cause COVID-19.

This vaccine only requires one dose. You are "fully vaccinated" 2 weeks after receiving your dose.

The vaccine delivers a small piece of genetic material called DNA into the cell.





## WHERE CAN I GET A COVID-19 VACCINE?

### **Mesa County Public Health**

510 29 ½ Rd, Grand Junction

Wednesday-Friday 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Saturday 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Go to [www.health.mesacounty.us/covid19/vaccine](http://www.health.mesacounty.us/covid19/vaccine) to **schedule an appointment** or call 970-248-6900. Appointments are encouraged but **walk-ins are welcome**.

**The vaccine is free.**

Mesa County Public Health can **bring vaccines to your business!**

If you are interested in **scheduling an onsite vaccination clinic**, please visit this [link](#).

There **is no charge for this service and the vaccine is free.**

**The State of Colorado** is also offering mobile vaccine clinics in their Vaccines For All Bus, visit [www.mobilevax.us](http://www.mobilevax.us) for locations near you in Mesa County.

The **vaccine is free, walk ins are welcome, and no ID is required.**

Vaccines are **available at many of our local pharmacies.**

Call your pharmacy directly or visit their website to schedule your appointment.



## WHERE CAN I GET A COVID-19 TEST?

### **Mesa County Public Health**

510 29 ½ Rd, Grand Junction

Tuesday - Saturday 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Testing is done by **nasal swab**. We have a PCR Rapid Test with **results in 20 minutes**.

**Testing is free.**

Register to save time at [link](#).

Several **health care clinics** offer COVID-19 testing in Mesa County.

It is a good idea to **call ahead to discuss your illness and to schedule an appointment.**

### **D51 Testing Sites at Grand Mesa Middle School & Fruita Monument High School**

Monday - Friday 10:00 AM - 5:00 PM.

Testing is done by **nasal swab and saliva (spit)**.

**Testing is free.**

**Registration is required**, see [link](#).



# COVID-19 STANDARDS CARING FOR OUR TEAM

## Commitment to [business name] Team Standards

As members of the [business name] team, we should all do our part to help each other stay safe and healthy. These standards were developed to optimize our work environment, to minimize health risks, and to protect you, your families, colleagues, and customers from the spread of COVID-19

### COVID Vaccination & Face Coverings

[Insert your expectation for your staff regarding COVID-19 vaccination & face coverings in this section. Our suggestion can be seen below.]

Employees are encouraged to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Appointment scheduling is available [here](#).

Vaccinated employees must send proof of vaccination to their manager.

**Vaccinated employees** may remove their face coverings while interacting with colleagues and customers.

**Unvaccinated employees** must wear a face covering while interacting with colleagues and customers.

### Stay Home if you are Sick

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or if you don't feel well, you must stay home. Notify your supervisor immediately.

The symptoms of COVID-19 to watch for are cough or shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, **OR** any two of the following: fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle or body aches/pain, headache, sore throat, a recent loss of taste or smell, fatigue, congestion/runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.

If a member of your household presents COVID-like symptoms, and you are at least 15 days past your final COVID vaccine, you will need to monitor for symptoms for 14 days but do not need to quarantine. If you are not fully vaccinated, please stay home and talk to your supervisor regarding next steps.

### Symptom Screening

Employees, volunteers, and interns are expected to monitor their own health prior to coming to work and throughout the day. Any illness should be immediately reported to the direct supervisor and the employee should go home.

### COVID Testing

If an employee becomes ill with symptoms of COVID-19, they should promptly notify their supervisor and return home. We strongly encourage COVID-19 testing if you are ill with COVID-19 symptoms. A current list of testing sites and hours is available [here](#).

#### You are COVID-19 Positive

Remain at home and in isolation (per [CDPHE guidance](#)) until the following three criteria are met:

- At least 10 days have passed since initial symptom onset,
- At least 24 hours fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medicine, and
- Improvement in symptoms.

#### Ill but COVID-19 Negative (without known exposure)

Remain at home until you have been fever-free for 24 hours and/or symptoms are improving.

#### Close Contact with COVID-19 Positive

If you are identified as a close contact of a known COVID-19 positive individual (within 6 feet for at least 15 minutes) -

If you are fully vaccinated (it has been at least 15 days since your final dose of COVID-19 vaccine), you do not need to quarantine. Please monitor for symptoms for 14 days from your most recent exposure. If you develop symptoms, isolate at home and consider being tested.

If you are not fully vaccinated (only partially vaccinated or never received a COVID-19 vaccine), it is important that you quarantine for 10 days. There is an option to end quarantine early on day 8. To qualify for this option, you need a negative molecular or antigen test on day 6 or later (following your high-risk exposure). With a negative result, you can end quarantine on day 8 (and continue to monitor for symptoms through day 14).



# COVID-19 STANDARDS

## CARING FOR OUR TEAM

### Use Good Public Health Practices

#### Social Distancing (6 feet)

- Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people when possible.
- Minimize congregating in common areas.
- Virtual meeting options are available and remain an option, in some cases, to avoid high-risk interactions.

#### Handwashing (20 seconds)

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing or touching your face.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, and wash your hands after touching your face.

#### Disinfecting

- Use hand sanitizer, cleaning wipes and other disinfectants throughout the day. After touching a few surfaces on the way to your office/cubicle, consider washing your hands or utilizing hand sanitizer.
- Employees should disinfect **[relevant surfaces at your business]** and other high-touch items after every use.

### Travel

**[business name]** will follow [travel guidance](#) from the CDC. Talk to your manager prior to traveling to discuss return to work guidance, as it may be different based on destination, activities, and vaccination status among others.

**Vaccinated employees** can travel safely within the United States. Upon return, employees will self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms; isolate and get tested if you develop symptoms. For [international travel](#), the CDC recommends a PCR or molecular test 3-5 days after travel. There is no self-quarantine requirement after arriving in the United States.

**Unvaccinated employees** should get tested with a PCR or molecular test 3-5 days after travel AND stay home and self-quarantine for a full 7 days after travel.

- Even if you test negative, stay home and self-quarantine for the full 7 days.
- If your test is positive, isolate yourself to protect others from getting infected.
- If you don't get tested, stay home and self-quarantine for 10 days after travel.
- Avoid being around people who are at increased risk for severe illness for 14 days, whether you get tested or not.
- Self-monitor for COVID-19 symptoms; isolate and get tested if you develop symptoms.

### Statement of Compliance

**[Business name]** employees are expected to comply with these standards. Noncompliance will be reviewed by **[insert name(s)/position(s) here]** and may result in disciplinary action. These standards may change depending on the spread of the virus, which may require a revision of this document. Notification will be provided.

If employees or volunteers are unable to meet any of these standards, they must discuss alternate precautionary measures to ensure safety of customers and fellow employees.



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