

ST. JOSEPH ACADEMY
(SJA)

Department:	Human Resources
Number:	300.42
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I. Purpose

Vaccination against viruses and other diseases improves the health and wellness of employees, reduces absences, decreases healthcare expenses, reduces doctor visits, and improves morale. St. Joseph Academy Early Childhood Education Center (“St. Joseph ECEC”) takes seriously its responsibility and duty to provide employees with a workplace (and desires to provide children, their families, and guests with an environment) free of recognized and preventable/mitigable hazards, including COVID-19 and other viruses and infections.

This policy requires vaccination against COVID-19 among St. Joseph ECEC employees. The goal is to protect—to the greatest extent possible—our employees, children, their families, guests, and the broader community from COVID-19 infection as we all do our part to survive this worldwide pandemic.

This policy is intended to comply with all federal, state, and local laws and is based upon guidance provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Department of Health and Human Services, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and public health and licensing authorities as applicable. However, this policy does not assume any legal duty not mandated by law.

II. Scope

This policy requires mandatory vaccination for all St. Joseph ECEC employees.

III. Requirements

Before March 1, 2022, all employees must: (a) provide proof (a copy of their vaccine card) that they have received a full COVID-19 vaccine series, including all CDC-recommended booster doses¹; or (b) obtain an approved exemption from St. Joseph ECEC as a medical or religious accommodation. The process for seeking an accommodation is explained below.

New St. Joseph ECEC employees must fulfill these requirements within 30 days of employment.

Employees who do not fulfill one of these requirements by the applicable deadline will be placed on unpaid leave, and if applicable, their status will be evaluated periodically to determine when it may be safe for them to return to work. Employees also may be disciplined, including termination, depending on the circumstances, especially if they intentionally violate this policy, wrongfully refuse to get vaccinated, or provide false or misleading information to support an exemption request.

St. Joseph ECEC will assist employees in identifying sites where employees may receive the vaccinations.

¹ As of the effective date of this policy, the CDC has recommended a booster dose for any adult who completed a Moderna or Pfizer series more than 6 months ago and for any individual who received a Johnson & Johnson dose more than 2 months ago.

Safety protocols will continue to be required, as appropriate, for those who do not receive the vaccine by the deadline due to a shortage (see below) or those exempted from the vaccination requirement as part of a medical or religious accommodation (see below).

IV. Vaccine Shortage Contingency

In the event of a COVID-19 vaccine shortage, St. Joseph ECEC will determine whether any modified or extended deadlines are required. Those who are unable to receive a vaccine due to shortage or other reasons may be subject to additional safety or virus mitigation measures as determined by St. Joseph ECEC consistent with prevailing public health authority recommendations.

V. Medical and Religious Exemption Requests

To assist any employee who has a qualifying medical condition that contraindicates the vaccination or objects to being vaccinated on the basis of sincerely held religious beliefs and practices, St. Joseph ECEC will engage in an interactive process to determine if it can provide a reasonable accommodation without imposing an undue hardship on St. Joseph ECEC or creating a direct threat to the health or safety of the employee or others in the workplace.

To request an accommodation for one of the above reasons, an employee must request a medical accommodation or a religious accommodation in writing. Once St. Joseph ECEC receives the written accommodation request, it will engage in an interactive process to identify potential accommodations on a case-by-case basis. Employees must cooperate and participate in this interactive process honestly and in good faith, and employees may be asked to provide additional information in support of the accommodation request. Even if a disability or sincerely held religious belief is established by an employee, the request may be denied due the seriousness of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting undue hardship and/or direct threat posed by the lack of vaccination, or an alternative accommodation may be given that maximizes safety despite the employee's inability to get vaccinated, depending on the circumstances.

VI. Non-Discrimination / Non-Retaliation

St. Joseph ECEC does not discriminate against its employees or applicants with regard to race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, or gender identity), national origin, age, disability and genetic information (including family medical history), or any other characteristic protected by applicable federal, state, or local law. St. Joseph ECEC also accommodates disabilities and sincerely held religious beliefs to the extent required by law and prohibits retaliation for any conduct protected by applicable law. Although an accommodation request may be denied (or an alternative, modified accommodation will be offered) if it poses an undue burden on St. Joseph ECEC and/or presents a direct threat to the health and safety of the employee or others, St. Joseph ECEC will not retaliate against any employee merely for requesting an accommodation.

If you believe you have been treated in a manner not in accordance with this policy, please notify the Felician Services Office of Corporate Compliance.

Approved by: 
President/CEO

Date 8/4/23