

School Staff Vaccination Reporting FAQ

August 30, 2021

1. *Who is required to submit staff vaccination rates to DHHS?*

All public Pre-k through 12 schools (including charter and magnet schools), private, and CTE schools.

2. *Who needs to be included in the required staff vaccination submission?*

All full- and part-time employees and all temporary or contracted personnel.

3. *What is the definition of fully vaccinated?*

The definition of “fully vaccinated” for the purposes of vaccination reporting is having received either two (2) doses of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines or a single dose of the one-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine, at least 14 days prior to the survey date.

4. *Why is DHHS collecting these data and how will these data be used?*

Recent data show that most individuals hospitalized due to COVID-19 were not fully vaccinated. Having a fully vaccinated education workforce, as well as vaccinating all students for whom the vaccine is authorized, is essential to ensuring that our schools are safe for students not eligible to be vaccinated and that schools remain fully open for in-person learning. Public health officials will use the de-identified staff vaccination rate data submitted by schools to DHHS to promote increased vaccination, inform parents and the public, identify schools that require additional support, and guide safety policies for schools that have lower staff vaccination rates.

5. *How will the data be submitted?*

An online submission form has been created by DHHS and will be sent by DOE as a Priority Notice to school leaders every month.

6. *How long will these data need to be submitted on a monthly basis?*

The Maine CDC and DHHS will review the need for the data on an ongoing basis. At this time there is no predetermined timeline for when the reporting requirements will cease.

7. *How will the data be reported?*

The data will be publicly available on the Maine CDC and DOE websites at the school level.

8. *How frequently will schools need to submit the information?*

On the first of each month, school and SAU leaders will be sent a link to a form to report the previous month’s vaccination data. Each school/SAU will be required to complete the form and submit electronically by the 10th of each month. Results will be publicly posted on the Maine CDC website by the 15th of each month.

9. *How will schools get this information from staff?*

Each school or SAU leader should establish with human resources a reporting method through which it can confirm each month the vaccination status of all fulltime, part-time, temporary, or contracted staff.

10. How should itinerant, district level people such as central office staff, or bus drivers be reported?

An option is provided for SAUs to report itinerant, central office or non-school specific staff in a collective group in addition to reporting for each school. A district may submit more than one form in one period: one for each school and their respective staff, and if necessary one for itinerant district central office staff. Each staff member should be counted only once per reporting period.

11. What information will be submitted?

The form will require the submitter to identify the school from a drop-down list, the total number of staff, and the total number of fully vaccinated staff. Additionally, each school will be asked to provide a point of contact, including email and phone.

12. Will the names of individuals who are or aren't vaccinated be reported?

No, and this information should be kept confidential within the school.

13. Where is the authority to compel our staff to share this information?

Pursuant to DHHS rule (10-144 ch. 258 § 2(C)(4)), DHHS has the authority to request this data. If you have any questions about the reporting process or are experiencing specific barriers, please let us know immediately so we can assist you in complying with this obligation. However, if we do not receive the data, we will be forced to notify the Attorney General's Office and pursue the enforcement actions authorized pursuant to 22 M.R.S. § 804(2)

14. Will staff vaccination tracking include athletic coaches, co-curricular advisors?

The definition of school "staff" for the purposes of vaccination reporting is all those providing instruction, services, or interacting with students in prekindergarten through grade 12, including all full- and part-time employees, and temporary or contracted personnel.

15. Is there a reporting database for this?

The reporting tool is a secure online form. The online form will be sent to districts through a priority notice each month as a reminder. The online form will be open between the 1st and 10th of each month and schools should report the data for the previous month.

16. We also have nursery school in our school, would we include these staff members' vaccine status?

At this time, we are only asking for staff vaccination rates for Pre-K through 12 schools.

17. Can the DOE require this as part of the certification process and do it through the MEIS portal?

DOE does not have the statutory authority to collect this data. Because of the time-sensitive nature of this data collection, changing the MEIS is not feasible.

18. Is staff reporting their vaccination status voluntary or required? How can we ask them to provide protected health information without legal issues?

Schools do not need to collect Protected Health Information (PHI) from staff to ascertain the staff vaccination rate. We encourage schools to use a de-identified survey to collect vaccination status. Those staff that do not respond to the survey need to be included as “unknown” vaccination status in the form. For reporting purposes, staff with unknown vaccination status will not be included in the numerator (fully vaccinated) but will still be included in the denominator (total staff).

19. Where does HIPPA come into this?

Collection of vaccination status does not require the collection of PHI, nor would any PHI be transferred to the state of Maine or published publicly. A de-identified survey sent to applicable staff is a recommended approach.

20. What happens if there are duplicate submissions for one school?

SAUs should work to coordinate submissions to ensure that only one form is completed for each school and/or central staff office. However, in the instance where there are duplicate submissions for one school, the last form submitted based on the submission time stamp will be the one that is accepted.