

# **Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Policy for Deerfield Academy Students**

## **I. Purpose**

Vaccination against viruses and other diseases improves the health and wellness of students and the Deerfield community, reduces absences, reduces doctor visits, and improves morale. Deerfield Academy (hereafter “the Academy”) takes seriously its responsibility and duty to provide students with an educational environment free of recognized and preventable/mitigable hazards, including COVID-19 and other viruses and infections.

This policy requires students to be vaccinated for COVID-19 before arriving on campus for the 2021 – 22 school year. The goal is to protect—to the greatest extent possible—our students and the broader community from COVID-19 infection.

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, and public health and licensing authorities as applicable. However, this policy does not assume any legal duty not mandated by law.

## **II. Requirements**

Before August 2, 2021, all students must: (a) receive a COVID-19 vaccine; (b) establish that they have received an approved COVID-19 vaccine from another source; or (c) obtain an approved exemption from the Academy as a medical or religious accommodation. The process for seeking an accommodation is explained below. Students who do not fulfill one of these three requirements by the deadline may be denied entrance to the campus, and if applicable, their status will be evaluated periodically to determine when it may be safe for them to return to school. Students also may be disciplined, including discharged from school, 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.

The Academy will assist students who are unable to obtain vaccination in their hometown or country prior to arriving on campus by providing on-site access to a COVID-19 vaccine or identifying sites where students may receive the vaccinations and transporting them to be vaccinated.

Safety protocols will be required or recommended, 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). These additional protocols may result in additional face-covering and social-distancing requirements or a leave of absence.

### **III. Medical and Religious Exemption Requests**

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

To request an accommodation for one of the above reasons, a student must complete a *Medical Accommodation Request Form* or a *Religious Accommodation Request Form* (available from Health Center). Once the Academy receives the accommodation request form, it will engage in an interactive process to identify potential accommodations on a case-by-case basis. Students must cooperate and participate in this interactive process honestly and in good faith, and students 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 a student, 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 student's inability to get vaccinated, depending on the circumstances.

### **IV. Non-Discrimination / Non-Retaliation**

As stated in its other policies, the Academy does not discriminate against its students 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. The Academy 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 the Academy and/or presents a direct threat to the health and safety of the student or others, the Academy will not retaliate against any student merely for requesting an accommodation.

### **V. Confidentiality**

The Academy will keep all students' vaccination statuses and underlying medical conditions confidential, in accordance with our published Notice of Privacy Practices, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and any other applicable law or regulation.