



Riverside County Office of Education
Division of Personnel Services

COVID-19 Vaccination, Testing Requirements, & Supplemental Paid Sick Leave Frequently Asked Questions January 8, 2024

*Please note that this information is subject to change;
as RCOE receives updated information from state and public health officials.*

Q1: Will the Riverside County Office of Education require employees to be vaccinated or participate in weekly testing?

A: Employees are no longer required to be fully vaccinated OR participate in weekly COVID-19 testing, with the exception of adult correctional programs.

Please note, as of April 4, 2023, employees in Early Education Services are no longer required to be fully vaccinated or participate in COVID-19 testing. EES employees who had medical or religious accommodations are no longer required comply with the accommodations.

Alternative Education: Employees in adult correctional programs will continue to test weekly if they are unvaccinated.

Additional information regarding vaccination requirements, policies, laws, and regulations may be found at www.osha.gov/coronavirus. The OSHA website includes information on:

- COVID-19 Laws and regulations
- COVID-19 Enforcement policies
- Compliance assistance materials and guidance
- Workers' Rights

Protection from Retaliation: The Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) prohibits retaliation against employees for exercising their rights guaranteed under the Act, including filing an occupational safety or health complaint, reporting a work-related injury or illness, or otherwise exercising any rights afforded by the OSHA.

Please note that any employee that provides false information regarding vaccine status or COVID-19 infection may be subject to discipline.

Q2: Am I still required to fill out the daily self-screening?

A: Yes. Employees are still required to complete their daily self-screening via the link that is sent to their RCOE email account, SMS, or using the [visitor link](#). As a reminder, the best way to communicate a positive test or close contact exposure to Risk Management is by completing your daily self-screening questionnaire.

Q3: Do I still have to wear a mask at work?

A: On February 28, 2022, Governor Newsom announced changes to the mask requirements in school settings which went into effect at 11:59 p.m. on March 11, 2022. The various programs we serve fall under multiple guidelines, so please follow the specific guidance for your program as listed below. *

**Please note the guidance is subject to change.*

Division of Early Education Services

RCOE employees reporting to CCTR (State Preschool) and CCTR (Teen Parent/Infant Toddler) school sites are no longer required to wear masks effective 11:59 pm on March 11, 2022. The guidance is that mask wearing is strongly recommended after March 11, 2022.

Effective January 6, 2023, the Office of Head Start (OHS) removed the requirement for universal masking for all individuals ages two (2) and older in Head Start, Early Head Start, and Migrant Head Start Programs. As of March 27, 2023, the final ruling by OHS does not address the vaccination and testing requirement.

Alternative Education

All staff that work within jail facilities are required to continue to wear masks. The Governor's order keeps mask wearing in place for correction facilities.

All Other RCOE Employees

All other employees may wear a mask, but it is not required unless directed by contact tracing.

Employees should continue to practice other safety measures such as hand washing and social distancing.

We recognize that there are differing perspectives concerning the mask guidance and ask that we all respect each person's choice and be sensitive to the individual needs of our families and staff.

Please contact your division head with any additional questions or concerns.

Q4: How do I obtain a COVID-19 test kit if I have been exposed to COVID-19 or if I am required to test through an accommodation related to a federal program?

Please contact Operational Support Services at staffcovidtesting@rcoe.us if you need a COVID-19 test kit related to work.

Please note the test kits are for the assigned RCOE employee only. Any employee that gives test kits to others may be subject to discipline.

Q5: What do I do if I test positive for COVID-19?

If an employee tests positive, they are to report an absence to the Absence Management System and request a substitute if necessary. An absence will be deducted from the employee's sick leave. In addition, the employee is to contact Risk Management for further instructions if they test positive and provide information regarding the positive COVID-19 test in their daily self-screening questionnaire.

RCOE will continue to provide contact tracing when an employee notifies Risk Management that they have tested positive or have been exposed to COVID-19. It is important for employees to timely report a positive test result, so that Risk Management may communicate any potential COVID-19 exposures.

Email: benefits@rcoe.us

Phone: (951) 826-6824

Q6: Where else can I go to get a COVID-19 test?

A: COVID-19 testing is free at multiple locations. You may need to show your ID and proof of health insurance. Most locations require an appointment, which can be made online. Be sure you confirm the location offers free testing before making your appointment. The following organizations offer COVID-19 testing:

Rite Aid

<https://www.riteaid.com/pharmacy/services/covid-19-testing>

CVS Pharmacy

<https://www.cvs.com/minuteclinic/covid-19-testing>

Riverside City Hall

<https://riversideca.gov/testing>

You may also find information about COVID-19 testing throughout the county at the Riverside University Health System website:

Riverside University Health System

<https://gettested.ruhealth.org/>

Q7: What if an employee in an adult correctional program cannot be vaccinated due to a disability/medical condition or sincerely held religious belief?

A: RCOE will engage in an interactive process in relation to medical or sincerely held religious belief exemption requests.

Medical Exemption Documentation should be submitted to:

Risk Management
Email: benefits@rcoe.us
Phone: (951) 826-6824

Religious Exemption Documentation should be submitted to:

Alexandra Aguayo
Executive Director's Secretary, Confidential
(951) 826-6683
aaguayo@rcoe.us

Q8: Will I be required to test if I'm exposed to COVID-19?

A: Yes. Employees who are exposed to COVID-19 are required to test and provide a copy of their test results to Risk Management. RCOE will provide free COVID-19 testing for employees who have been exposed to COVID-19 in the workplace.

Employees who have been exposed to COVID-19 within the last 10 days, are required to report that they have been exposed in their daily self-screening questionnaire. RCOE will continue to provide contact tracing when an employee notifies Risk Management that they have been exposed to COVID-19.

Q9: If I contract COVID-19 at work, will I have additional leave available to me?

A: If you believe you contracted COVID-19 at work, you may file a Workers' Compensation claim. An approved Workers' Compensation claim allows for Industrial Accident Leave up to 60 days that would apply to the absence before using the employee's sick leave. Please contact Risk Management immediately if you believe you have been exposed to COVID-19 at work.

Q10: Where do I find additional information about leaves?

A: Please refer to the following documents for more information on available leaves:

- Classified Employees:
Collective Bargaining Agreement – Article XVI
- Certificated Employees:
Collective Bargaining Agreement – Article XIV
- Confidential, Supervisory, and Management Employees: *Employee Handbooks*

The above documents may be found on the RCOE website on the Division of Personnel Services page at www.rcoe.us/departments/personnel-services/agreements-and-handbooks

Q11: Who do I contact if I have questions?

A. The following people can assist you with questions:

Questions about leaves:

Personnel Analyst Contact Information:

Marlene Redding (A-L)
mredding@rcoe.us
951-826-6644

Bianca Blankenship (M-Z)
bblankenship@rcoe.us
951-826-6506

Questions about religious exemptions:

Employee Services: Email: aaguayo@rcoe.us or Phone: (951) 826-6683

Questions about workers' compensation and accommodations for medical restrictions, and medical exemptions:

Risk Management Contact Information: Email: benefits@rcoe.us or Phone: (951) 826-6824

Questions about how to access a rapid COVID-19 test: email staffcovidtesting@rcoe.us

Questions related to my specific program:

Please contact your Supervisor, Executive Director, or Division Head.