

# SOUTHWESTERN LAW SCHOOL

## L O S A N G E L E S

### COVID-19 Vaccine and Booster Policy

**Administrative policy.** Effective December 17, 2021.

**Revision history:** Revised January 6, 2022; revised April 12, 2022; revised April 20, 2022 (regarding coaches and volunteers); revised August 13, 2022 (adding Novavax as an accepted vaccine; adjusting the minor child caregiver criteria for Spring 2023; removing sections applicable only to the Summer 2022 term; updating the international students section); revised September 4, 2022 (noting that Novavax does not yet have a booster; eliminating deadlines that have passed; clarifying information on subsequent boosters); revised September 19, 2022 (adding reservation of rights); revised December 16, 2022 (changes regarding mandatory surveillance testing and Novavax as a booster; changes are effective as of January 1, 2023).

**Scheduled review date:** April 2023 (COVID Response Team).

**Related guidance and forms:** FAQs posted on Southwestern's [COVID-19 updates page](#) and Southwestern's [Institutional Policies page](#); forms and questionnaires for ADA accommodations, primary caregiver accommodations, medical and religious exemptions, and pregnancy deferrals, all of which are available on Southwestern's [COVID-19 updates page](#) and Southwestern's [Institutional Policies page](#).

#### A. Overview

Southwestern Law School's proactive implementation of a COVID-19 vaccination requirement proved to be an important factor in keeping our community safe during the 2021–2022 academic year.

The science shows that booster shots are critical to managing the ongoing risks of contracting and transmitting COVID-19 and mitigating serious symptoms in many individuals. In addition, as we saw with the Omicron variant, variants can be even more transmissible than variants we have experienced in the past. Consequently, Southwestern will continue requiring students, faculty, staff, coaches, and volunteers who plan to access campus during the Summer 2022 session or the 2022–2023 academic year to be and remain fully vaccinated against COVID-19. "Fully vaccinated" is defined in **Section C** below.

## **B. Course Modality and Limited Remote Options**

1. **Primarily on-campus instruction during the 2022–2023 academic year:** Absent a COVID-19 surge or some other currently unanticipated event that results in all classes being shifted to remote learning, Southwestern plans to hold courses on campus and in person. Exceptions to in-person classes will include a limited number of courses designated by Southwestern as online courses and certain courses or portions of courses in Southwestern’s hybrid evening program.
2. **Limited remote options after the Summer 2022 session and for the 2022–2023 academic year:**
  - a. **Phase-out of existing semester-long remote options:**
    - i. After the Summer 2022 session, Southwestern will not be offering a semester-long remote option for students or employees who are not fully vaccinated.
    - ii. Unless approved for an ADA or primary caregiver accommodation or assigned to teach a designated online course, faculty are expected to teach on campus starting with SCALE Period 1 and the Summer 2022 session.
  - b. **Available remote options:** Remote options for some courses in the curriculum may be available during the 2022–2023 academic year (starting with SCALE Period 1 and the Fall 2022 semester for traditional courses) on the bases listed below.
    - i. **ADA reasonable accommodation:** Students and faculty who are approved for remote attendance or instruction as a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act after registering with the Dean of Students Office (students) or Human Resources (employees), completing a questionnaire, submitting required documentation, and completing an interactive, individualized process with Southwestern.
    - ii. **Certain primary caregivers:** Students and faculty who are primary caregivers for minor children who are not yet eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine or for medically vulnerable individuals who are not able to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, after completing a questionnaire,

submitting required documentation and engaging in an interview with a committee of Southwestern administrators (students) or with Human Resources (employees). Because children between 6 months and 5 years old are now eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, any new applications for the minor child caregiver courtesy application will be limited to children under 6 months old.

For deadlines, forms, and information about each process, students should email [covidmanager@swlaw.edu](mailto:covidmanager@swlaw.edu), and employees should email [hr@swlaw.edu](mailto:hr@swlaw.edu).

**c. No temporary remote option for students:**

- i.** Southwestern will not be offering a temporary remote option during the 2022–2023 academic year.
- ii.** Individuals who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, who are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, or who have been diagnosed with or have symptoms of another contagious illness (e.g., influenza) must refrain from accessing campus. The absences will be part of the Attendance Policy included in the Student Handbook and course syllabi. Students are advised to contact the Dean of Students Office and keep records of COVID-related absences in case needed in the administration of the Attendance Policy.
- iii.** Faculty who are symptomatic or ill but who are able to teach remotely may do so for a limited period to avoid disrupting the class schedule, subject to discussion with a Vice Dean.

- d. Class recordings:** Faculty will record as many class sessions as possible during the Summer 2022 session and the 2022–2023 academic year. Recordings will be made via Zoom but will be audio-only. Exceptions to having classes (or portions of a class) recorded will include courses in which live-client matters are discussed and some simulation courses. This policy is not a guarantee of a successful or entirely audible recording. Recordings may be limited by available technology, by equipment, or by human error. Students who miss a class may access the recordings via the course Canvas page but will not be counted present for attendance purposes. Students who miss a class are encouraged to seek notes from classmates and visit

the professor during office hours if they have questions about concepts they missed.

### **C. Definition of “Fully Vaccinated”**

To be considered “fully vaccinated” under this policy means that an individual must satisfy each requirement below; remaining “fully vaccinated” is a continuing responsibility. See **Section D** below for deadlines, **Section E** for how to submit vaccine documentation, **Section F** for exemptions, **Section G** for pregnancy deferrals, and **Section H** for international students.

- An individual has received all required doses of a CDC- or WHO-approved vaccine (for example, two doses of a Pfizer, Moderna, or Novavax vaccine or one dose of a Johnson & Johnson vaccine).
- At least two weeks have passed since an individual received their final dose.
- An individual has received a first booster within 30 days of becoming eligible.
- The individual has submitted proof of vaccination, including any booster received, to [covidmanager@swlaw.edu](mailto:covidmanager@swlaw.edu).

As of October 2022, those who received the Novavax vaccine are eligible for a booster six months after completing the primary series; in addition, the FDA has approved Novavax as a booster by those who received other COVID-19 vaccines.

If an individual has received the COVID-19 vaccination and is eligible to receive the first booster but have a special circumstance, such as a recommendation from a medical provider that you slightly delay receiving the booster, please email [covidmanager@swlaw.edu](mailto:covidmanager@swlaw.edu) before the deadlines in **Section D** below to discuss your situation. Southwestern may require you to use the medical exemption process for a delay that exceeds 30 days.

Southwestern encourages, but does not at this time require, individuals to obtain boosters beyond the first.

**D. Deadlines:** Unless otherwise noted below, for questions about deadlines, please contact [covidmanager@swlaw.edu](mailto:covidmanager@swlaw.edu).

**1. Initial vaccine**

**New students:** May 15, 2022 (SCALE students) or June 30, 2022 (traditional students).

**a. New employees, coaches, and volunteers:** Before accessing campus. Please coordinate with [hr@swlaw.edu](mailto:hr@swlaw.edu).

**2. First Booster**

**a. New students:** If eligible, May 15 (SCALE students) or June 30 (traditional students). If not eligible as of their start date, within 30 days of becoming eligible.

**b. New employees, coaches, and volunteers:** If eligible, before accessing campus. If not eligible as of their start date, within 30 days of becoming eligible.

**c. Continuing students:** If eligible, May 1, 2022 (for those enrolled in Summer session), May 31, 2022 (for those not enrolled in Summer session), and June 4, 2022 (for those enrolled in the London Study-Aboard Program). If not eligible as of the noted deadline, within 30 days of becoming eligible.

**d. Continuing employees:** If eligible, May 1, 2022. If not eligible, within 30 days of becoming eligible.

**3. Subsequent boosters:** Southwestern will communicate deadlines via email if and when Southwestern decides to require them.

**E. Submitting Documentation:** Please submit a true, accurate, and clear image of your vaccine card that shows the date you received each dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, including any COVID-19 booster, using this link: [Southwestern COVID-19 Proof of Vaccination & Booster Submission Form](#). If you have issues with the upload, please email [covidmanager@swlaw.edu](mailto:covidmanager@swlaw.edu).

**F. Vaccine and Booster Exemptions:** Southwestern will continue to allow vaccine and booster exemptions when an individual has a documented medical condition that contraindicates a COVID-19 vaccination or booster or when an individual holds a sincere religious belief, practice, or observance that is contrary to receiving a COVID-19 vaccination. Approval of a medical or religious exemption for the vaccine does not entitle a student to attend classes remotely or an employee to work remotely. The process for requesting a remote option is described in **Section (B)(2)(b)** above.

- 1. Continuing students and employees with an existing medical or religious exemption:** Individuals who previously received an exemption from Southwestern for the COVID-19 vaccination are also exempt from the booster requirement and do not need to file additional forms or materials for Summer 2022 or the 2022–2023 academic year.
- 2. New booster exemption for continuing students and employees without an existing exemption:** A continuing student or employee without a previously approved exemption but who has a medical contraindication to receiving a COVID-19 booster may seek a medical exemption for boosters. Please contact [covidmanager@swlaw.edu](mailto:covidmanager@swlaw.edu) to initiate this process, which will require completing a questionnaire and providing documentation from a licensed healthcare provider.
- 3. New students:** New students who are seeking a medical or religious exemption should submit a request form by May 15, 2022 (for SCALE students) or June 30, 2022 (for traditional and other students). Any student admitted after these deadlines should refer to their admission letter for pertinent deadlines. Students seeking a medical exemption must complete a questionnaire and submit medical documentation from a licensed healthcare provider. Students seeking a religious exemption must provide evidence of having consulted with a licensed healthcare provider and complete a questionnaire. Exemption request forms are available on Southwestern’s [COVID-19 updates page](#) and Southwestern’s [Institutional Policies page](#).
- 4. New employees:** Offers to employees will be contingent on the individual either providing evidence of being fully vaccinated or being approved for a medical or religious exemption or pregnancy deferral. The Human Resources staff will work directly with each individual to explain this process.

**G. Pregnancy Deferral:** An initial COVID-19 vaccine or any booster may be deferred due to an individual's pregnancy. To initiate a pregnancy deferral, an individual should submit a request form as soon as possible. An approved deferral of the vaccine or booster will extend throughout the term of the pregnancy and until the individual returns to work or instruction, as applicable. Forms are available on Southwestern's [COVID-19 updates page](#) and Southwestern's [Institutional Policies page](#). An individual who is pregnant and not fully vaccinated due to the pregnancy may also pursue a remote option as described in **Section (B)(2)(b)** above, but approval of a pregnancy deferral alone will not entitle an individual to be remote for the semester or period of pregnancy.

**H. International Students:** International students or others who have been traveling abroad and obtained a COVID-19 vaccine or booster outside the United States may submit documentation signed by a healthcare provider duly licensed to practice medicine in the United States or the foreign country in which the vaccine or booster was received. The documentation must include the dates of the initial vaccination doses, the name of the COVID-19 vaccination received, and the dates and names of any boosters received. International students or others who have received a COVID-19 vaccine not licensed or under an emergency use authorization by the FDA in the United States, or not authorized for use or emergency use by the WHO, may apply for a medical accommodation, which will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. In general, these individuals will be designated as partially vaccinated and subject to regular testing until they become fully vaccinated.

International students and others who are not fully vaccinated but were traveling abroad and arrive in the United States to enter Southwestern are subject to any quarantine restrictions imposed by the federal government, the State of California, or the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health.

International students and others who are not fully vaccinated but were traveling abroad should email [covidmanager@swlaw.edu](mailto:covidmanager@swlaw.edu) as soon as possible and should not access campus without the written approval of Southwestern's Health & Safety Manager.

**I. Failure to Comply with the COVID-19 Vaccine Requirement**

1. **Continuing students** who do not or cannot submit evidence of being fully vaccinated by the noted deadlines, who do not have a Southwestern-approved medical or religious exemption, have not been approved for a remote option under **Section (B)(2)(b)** above or pregnancy deferral under **Section G** above, or who have not been granted a delay by Southwestern's Health & Safety Manager to obtain a booster due to special circumstances will not be permitted to register for the 2022–2023 academic year, or if already registered, will be

administratively withdrawn.

2. **New students** who do not or cannot submit evidence of being fully vaccinated by the noted deadlines, who do not have a Southwestern-approved medical or religious exemption, have not been approved for a remote option under **Section (B)(2)(b)** above or pregnancy deferral under **Section G** above, or who have not been granted a delay by Southwestern's Health & Safety Manager to obtain a booster due to special circumstances will be administratively withdrawn.
  3. **Faculty and staff** who do not or cannot submit evidence of being fully vaccinated by the noted deadline, who do not have a Southwestern-approved medical or religious exemption, have not been approved for a remote option under **Section (B)(2)(b)** above or pregnancy deferral under **Section G** above, or who have not been granted a delay by Southwestern's Health & Safety Manager to obtain a booster due to special circumstances may be subject to corrective action.
  4. **Volunteers and coaches** who fail to meet the COVID-19 vaccination and booster requirement will not be permitted to access campus.
- J. **COVID-19 Testing:** As of January 1, 2023, Southwestern will not require COVID-19 surveillance testing and will not be offering testing on campus. Southwestern will retain a relationship with Nobility Health, Inc., which will allow students and employees to continue testing on a voluntary basis at Nobility's off-campus locations, at no charge to the individual or school.
- K. **Additional Questions:** For additional COVID-related questions not addressed in this policy, contact [covidmanager@swlaw.edu](mailto:covidmanager@swlaw.edu). Also consult the current FAQs posted on Southwestern's [COVID-19 updates page](#) and Southwestern's [Institutional Policies page](#). (The Fall 2022 are the current FAQs.)
- L. **Policy Revisions:** Southwestern reserves the right to change or modify any aspect of this policy and the related protocols at any time, with or without prior notice.