

Dear St. Mary Community,

Thank you for your commitment to our students and for advancing the St. Mary Catholic School & Church mission. Your role as an educator, aide, coach, moderator or volunteer for the school and/or church is vitally essential in our efforts to serve God and to form Christian leaders spiritually, intellectually, physically, and culturally. We are tremendously grateful.

Please read the information below about the COVID 19 Vaccination:

COVID19 VACCINATION REQUIREMENT:

Last week, Governor Inslee announced a new directive requiring all employees of public and private school districts to be vaccinated against COVID-19 by October 18, 2021. This mandate included ELC teachers and staff as well. It also includes coaches and volunteers.

As noted by Washington Superintendent of Public Instruction Chris Reykdal and Governor Inslee, “this order should not delay or impact our return to full-time, in-person learning this fall. Employees who are not yet vaccinated will have time to do so while still working and serving students. In addition, the order is specific to school employees and is not related to the vaccination of students.” You can review the directive at the below link:

[COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement for K–12 School Employees: Frequently Asked Questions](#)

In a formal response to Governor Inslee’s mandate, Bishop Daly stated that parish schools **must** follow vaccine and mask mandates as well as exemptions allowed under state law. Furthermore, Bishop Daly wrote to the priests of the diocese clarifying the effect of the vaccine mandate on Catholic schools in the diocese. The letter also clarifies exemptions under state law and how Catholic schools will acknowledge these exemptions. (See Bishop Daly’s *Diocesan Guidance for Catholic Schools in Eastern Washington and FAQs Statement attached*).

Who does the order apply to?

The order applies to all employees, coaches and volunteers working for private schools as well as public school districts, charter schools, and educational service districts. The order does not apply to state-tribal education compact schools or to students.

Will students be required to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to attend school?

No. At this time, students who are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine are not required to be vaccinated to attend school in-person. The State Board of Health has a formal process for setting the immunization requirements for K–12 students in Washington state.

COVID VACCINATION DOCUMENTATION FOR FACULTY/STAFF/COACHES & VOLUNTEERS

All faculty, staff, coaches and volunteers are required to provide the St. Mary school and/or church with documentation of their COVID 19 vaccination. The acceptable documentation includes any one of the following:

- COVID 19 vaccination card
- Certificate of COVID 19 Vaccination
- Washington State Immunization Information System printout: Create and account with the WA State Dept of Health to access your immunization records
<https://wa.myir.net/>

Please bring one of the above documents to either the church or school office or email a scanned copy to vaccine@stmarysspokane.org by October 18th.

All information regarding vaccination status will be held confidentially in the school or church office. If you need to apply for a medical or religious exemption, please contact Father Jeff Lewis, Ben Walker or Sharon Greany for more information. Medical and religious exemptions must be received by the school/church by October 18th, 2021. They can be dropped in person or emailed to vaccine@stmarysspokane.org as well.

We are grateful for your commitment to St. Mary School and Church and your role in providing a transformational experience for all our families and students. As a Catholic community, St. Mary strives to protect the needs and dignity of the individual as well as to live our call to love one another, to protect the vulnerable, and to be mindful of the common good of those in our community. Thank you for your help keeping our families and children healthy and safe.

Please contact Fr. Lewis or Ben Walker with questions or concerns.

God bless you!