

A Message from Your DFKDC COVID-19 Committee

Dear DFKDC Community,

On reflection, it is striking that much of our community engagement and programming over the last two years (and counting) has been virtual. We are delighted and humbled that Dreams For Kids DC connections have remained stronger than ever, despite the challenges of these times.

DFKDC remains committed to providing life-changing activities that empower children with disabilities in a safe and healthy environment. As we look ahead to the remainder of 2022 and 2023, we will continue to provide virtual programs and also reintroduce more in-person events.

The DFKDC COVID-19 Committee recently conducted a thorough review of the policies and procedures that were developed and implemented throughout 2020-2021. Mindful that our community includes people who are at a higher-risk for experiencing severe COVID-19 symptoms and complications, we decided to retain many of these original policies and procedures to best protect those who are most vulnerable in our community, including people with disabilities, older adults, pregnant or recently pregnant women, and young children. While adjustments were made to reflect the current environment and CDC guidance, all in-person events will continue to follow comprehensive COVID-19 screening and risk mitigation procedures, including masking and proof of vaccination.

Effective immediately, please find the current DFKDCs *COVID-19 Policy* enclosed. This policy will be shared with all stakeholders, and will remain in effect unless otherwise notified.

We thank each of you for the many contributions you've made in keeping the DFKDC community engaged, empowered, healthy, and safe. As always, please contact us if you have any questions—and, whether virtually or in-person, we can't wait to see you at our next event!

Sincerely,



Glenda Fu Smith
Executive Director



Rachel Merritt
Chairman of the Board



Seye Iwarere
General Counsel



Attie Poirier
Committee Chair

Key Points for DFKDC COVID-19 Policy, Effective August 4, 2022

The following event attendance, policy compliance, and governance frameworks will inform how DFKDC mitigates and manages risks associated with COVID-19 on behalf of its community from the date of issuance until further updates or revisions are published. Many DFKDC policies remain unchanged from those previously established, except as explicitly noted below.

2022 Considerations & Revisions

Upon conclusion of extensive analysis, legal evaluation, and consideration of personal health and safety feedback from essential Dreams For Kids DC team members, we have elected to continue following strict requirements for pre-event screening, proof of vaccination, and on-site masking for all in-person events and activities.

Governance

DFKDC continues to monitor the ongoing impacts of COVID-19 and CDC updates. Upon evaluation of the latest CDC guidance, the DFKDC COVID-19 committee determined to continue following our current protocols to protect our community's at-risk members.

Unless otherwise communicated to the DFKDC community by the issuance of amendments to our policy, the COVID-19 committee will continue to assess evolving guidance and dynamics for the foreseeable future on a monthly, quarterly, and annual cadence. This includes:

- *Monthly procedural reviews:* The COVID-19 Committee will continue to discuss procedural implications of new guidance, protocol compliance for recent and upcoming events, and unique considerations presented by members of the community monthly. Monthly COVID-19 Committee activities may typically include:
 - Exposure or incident reporting and follow-up, if appropriate
 - Review COVID-19 protocols and compliance for recently held activities
 - Validate procedural compliance and readiness for upcoming activities
- *Quarterly policy assessments:* The COVID-19 Committee will continue to meet at least once per quarter to determine whether, at its sole discretion, any revisions to existing policies and procedures should be further assessed for possible updates ahead of the annual update schedule. These determinations will be made at the committee's sole discretion based on macro-environmental considerations related to COVID-19.

- *Annual updates:* For the foreseeable future, the committee will continue to conduct an annual assessment of all policies, procedures, and protocols to either issue an annual policy revision or reaffirm existing policies across the DFKDC community.

Event Attendance

The below policy requirements apply uniformly to all in-person event or activity participants, including but not limited to parents, guardians, volunteers, sponsors, and DFKDC staff. Unless otherwise specified, attendee requirements defined by our policies and supporting waivers, pre-screenings, and other documentation apply to all individuals without exception.

All in-person DFKDC event attendees must maintain compliance with all DFKDC policies, procedures, and protocols before, during, and after the event as outlined below.

Prior to Event

- Upon event registration:
 - All attendees must acknowledge receipt and understanding of this COVID-19 Policy document.
 - *All attendees must* submit a signed release and waiver of liability form to DFKDC no later than one (1) business day before the attendee's event. Parents or legal guardians of attendees younger than eighteen (18) years old must sign and submit this form on their behalf. This form includes, but is not limited to, a waiver of liability, an assumption of risk release, and an acknowledgment of DFKDC's right and intent to disclose potential exposure to any relevant persons or community groups upon receiving notification of any event attendee's positive COVID-19 diagnosis after the event, as it sees fit and at its sole discretion.
 - All attendees must agree and acknowledge that they are vaccinated and will supply proof of vaccination status.
- *Pre-event screening:* Not more than ten (10) days prior to an event, and no less than one (1) business day prior to an event, each attendee must complete and submit the pre-screening questionnaire to DFKDC. All submissions must be truthful and complete to support event safety and risk mitigation and management protocols applied by DFKDC.

- *Proof of vaccination status:* All attendees must share their CDC vaccination card indicative of complete compliance with current CDC vaccination and other public health guidelines¹ with DFKDC, or acknowledge over email that they will supply proof of vaccination prior to check-in at the upcoming event, no later than one (1) business day prior to said event.
- *Recent travel or high exposure risk disclosure:* While not required through the pre-screening process², any attendee who has traveled outside of the DC metro region within one (1) week of the event is encouraged to voluntarily disclose recent travel prior to arrival at the event for risk tolerance evaluation. Further, voluntary disclosure is encouraged for anyone who has been in a situation that may be considered high-risk for COVID-19 exposure, or who is unsure about what may constitute a potential high-risk exposure given the current community, regional, and national guidelines.

DFKDC reserves the right to assess recent COVID-19 case information, area guidelines outside of the DC metro region, request a proof of negative test prior to event attendance, or take other action it deems most appropriate after consideration of the disclosed circumstances. The disclosing attendee(s) will receive written notice of event attendance approval or denial after assessment of the potential risk factors, as determine at the sole discretion of the DFKDC Executive Director, if she will be present at said event, or her delegate who will be in attendance and is assigned to lead that event.

- *Event cancellation and communication:* At its sole discretion, DFKDC retains the right to cancel events due to community case rate or exposure concerns. Any cancellations leading up to on or on the day of the event will be communicated in writing to all participants within fifteen (15) minutes of said decisions being made.

During Event

¹ Previously, compliance with current CDC recommendations meant being “fully vaccinated” according to the needs of the vaccine type received. As boosting recommendations continue to evolve, attendees will be required to remain in compliance with those vaccination and boosting recommendations and timelines as defined by the CDC.

² In prior policy versions, disclosure of travel outside of the DC metro-region (DMV) within two weeks of event attendance was required. Previously this was assessed through mandatory pre-screening procedures, with any travel being grounds to deny event attendance. Recent travel disclosure is now voluntary but encouraged.

- *Event onsite pre-screening per attendee:* Each event attendee must submit to pre-event screening, to include a documented temperature reading and additional completion of the screening questionnaire, upon arrival at the event site. Onsite pre-screening must precede event check-in and participation, with no exemptions.
- *Mandatory masking requirement:* All event participants must remain fully masked for the duration of each event. Due to the increased transmissibility of known variants, only masks or face coverings that comply with current CDC guidelines and recommendations will be accepted. Unmasked participants or those who wear masks improperly will be asked to leave the event at the sole discretion of DFKDC. Appropriate masking is the sole responsibility of each attendee, though DFKDC will attempt to provide compliant masks for attendees who do not have or have forgotten their compliant mask when possible.
- *Social distancing for eating and drinking:* During events where food is provided, or when water or another beverage is needed, participants must social distance themselves from other attendees prior to removing their mask to eat or drink. Participants must promptly reapply masks, wash or sanitize hands, and sanitize relevant surfaces and/or dispose of exposed materials after eating or drinking is finished.
- *Spacing and movement flow requirements:* When deemed necessary by DFKDC, all attendees must comply with established social distancing, activity spacing, and/or movement requirements as pre-defined by DFKDC for the duration of the event.

After Event

- *Exposure notification:* Acknowledging that breakthrough cases have become more common both with masked and fully vaccinated individuals, Following an event, DFKDC will try, in good faith, to communicate with any individual attendees who may have been exposed to COVID-19. DFKDC retains this right at its sole discretion and will communicate information to the extent it deems appropriate to adequately convey concerns and to best support the individual attendee's and larger community's safety.

Self-Determined Risk Tolerance

At a minimum, DFKDC requires adherence to the COVID-19 policies outlined in this document. DFKDC also acknowledges that overall risk tolerance is subjective based on each individual's situation and provides the following information to aid in the personal self-screening practices and risk self-determinations of individual attendees, as well as to provide transparency into some of the resources leveraged in defining this policy.

- *Self-screening and self-determination:* DFKDC refers to several trusted open-source resources to establish its policies, and encourages participants to do the same to weigh their personal risk tolerance against planned possible exposure through specific events or activities. To aid personal self-screening practices and risk self-determinations, some publicly available resources will be shared as an appendix to policy documentation.

Policy Compliance

It takes community-wide compliance to best protect the health and safety of our entire DFKDC family, and DFKDC is committed to maintaining current COVID-19 risk mitigation and management strategies.

- *Questions or concerns:* All questions or concerns about the DFKDC **COVID-19 Policy** guidelines and requirements must be directed in writing to the Dreams For Kids DC Executive Director. In order to protect the health and safety of all event attendees, policies will not be further explained or justified at in-person events.
- *Repeat failure to comply with policy:* At its sole discretion, DFKDC maintains the right to deny event participation to any attendee who has repeatedly demonstrated an unwillingness to comply with its COVID-19 policy. Via email, DFKDC will document repeated non-compliance concerns once in writing to the relevant attendee and/or parent or guardian. After this communication, DFKDC may choose to revoke attendance or participation rights for any attendee at any time due to non-compliance.

Historical Response to COVID-19

For those who have historical questions, or may be new to our community, below is a summary of the actions the COVID-19 Committee took in immediate response to the evolving situation in early 2020. This also includes a summary of major revisions to policies and procedures implemented as the situation and response evolved globally, nationally, and locally.

Immediate Response

Immediately upon the beginning of quarantine in the DC metro-region in March 2020, DFKDC established a COVID-19 Response committee to advise on and support a cross-section of community needs including participant and donor communications, programming changes, and risk mitigation and management. Committee recommendations and activities proved critical in our organizational success in pivoting to an all-digital landscape. During this time, DFKDC:

- Surveyed families, participants, and stakeholders about programmatic considerations;
- Aligned programming impact and adjustments with the DFKDC parents' committee feedback;
- Issued an organizational statement to all stakeholders about adjustments, changes, and plans related to the COVID-19 situation in early April 2020; and,
- Launched weekly DFKDC Digital clinics aligned with our new all-digital strategy to keep our community connected during uncertain times.

2020 Considerations & Revisions

After the initial shutdown and throughout 2020, the committee standardized its all-digital operating model, established weekly advisory meetings, and implemented a quarterly communications plan to keep the community up to date on DFKDC's plans, policies, and procedures as the pandemic continued to evolve. During this time, DFKDC:

- Issued community and stakeholder updates at least once per quarter;
- Strengthened global partnerships to expand DFKDC Digital programming;
- Conducted a safety assessment to outline all risk factors DFKDC should proactively manage if DFKDC elected to restart select in-person programming, in alignment with CDC and local community recommendations;
- Established crisis communications plans to inform possibly impacted community members and support contact tracing were a positive COVID-19 diagnosis to occur;
- Removed refundable event deposit requirements to encourage participants to only attend events when not experiencing any symptoms or concerns on the day of events; and,

- Implemented robust protocols to manage COVID-19 exposure risks before, during, and after events including, but not limited to:
 - Conducting re-screening procedures 2 weeks before and on the day of each event;
 - Requiring masking and social distancing in compliance with CDC guidelines;
 - Designating spacing and movement paths to minimize close contacts;
 - Sanitizing commonly touched surfaces frequently;
 - Limiting exposure by pairing one child to one parent or guardian per activity, in lieu of pairing with volunteers outside of the child's regular contacts;
 - Requiring participant and parent or legal guardian signoff for waiving liability, and acknowledgment of understanding and compliance with all event rules during registration and event pre-screening; and, Staffing events with DFKDC COVID-19 committee and/or Board of Directors members to support, monitor, and implement screening and safety procedures.

After declining to host several events that did not adhere to the established comprehensive safety parameters, DFKDC evaluated several options for returning to in-person activities in summer and fall 2020. DFKDC held its first outdoor, socially distanced, in-person event in October 2020.

2021 Considerations & Revisions

DFKDC continued to monitor and assess its policies, procedures and future plans against the changing backdrop of the pandemic. Throughout 2021, as vaccinations were rolled out to different community groups, indoor activity regulations and public-health recommendations eased, and children returned to in-person education and after-school activities, DFKDC:

- Re-evaluated its policies and procedures to consider the changing CDC guidelines, new information about impacts to vulnerable populations, and local community norms;
- Implemented proof of vaccination requirements for all events once vaccines were broadly attainable by the general population;
- Retained existing masking requirements for all events; Ceased designating spacing and movement paths at events, and eased social distancing - from required to recommended - at the discretion of each participant; and,
- Continued weekly DFKDC Digital clinics, while also holding DFKDC curriculum programs in a hybrid format.

2022 Considerations & Revisions

From March-July 2022, the DFKDC COVID-19 committee conducted another comprehensive analysis of its policies and procedures against evolving COVID-19 risks, special considerations for populations served, and general vaccination availability. A variety of reputable, public resources were analyzed, with our primary source for evaluating impacts to the primary demographic that we serve being CDC's website for [COVID-19 Information and Resources: People with Disabilities](#)³.

DFKDC's COVID-19 committee concluded that our policies should be reassessed at least annually on an ongoing basis. The final determinations for DFKDC's COVID-19 policy, effective August 4, 2022, are outlined throughout the entirety of this document.

³ Available online on cdc.gov: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/humandevlopment/covid-19/people-with-disabilities.html#:~:text=Most%20people%20with%20disabilities%20are,severe%20illness%20from%20COVID%2D19.>