

Updated: 5/26/2023

A joint decision by the Players' Association and ASO Society has been made to lift the vaccination policy at the beginning of the 2023-2024 season. As always, the situation will be monitored and the policy will be updated as necessary. Below is the communication from the Players' Committee:

With the distribution of the June 1 calendar and the commencement of the 2023-2024 season, the Players' Committee and Society are both in favor of lifting the COVID vaccine requirement for all players.

As we have learned from the previous three seasons, COVID infection rates can fluctuate drastically throughout the year, during and after holidays, and around the school calendar. The Players' Committee and the Society will continue to monitor infection rates over the summer months and throughout the upcoming season. The Committee will be ready to revisit and, if needed, amend our policy to protect the musicians, staff, and our patrons.

While the COVID vaccination policy is being lifted, the Committee is strongly recommending the following for all musicians:

1. Continue to receive vaccinations/boosters as you are eligible. Staying up to date with your booster shots is the only way to ensure the highest levels of protection for yourself and transmission to others. If the vaccine requirement is reinstated, your up-to-date booster shots will ensure your ability to continue performing.
2. Continue to wear masks, practice social distancing, and any other mitigation strategies that make you and others feel comfortable. Please continue to be aware of your colleagues and their health and wellness.
3. Please do not come to services if you are feeling ill or have symptoms of an illness. The health and wellness of all musicians should be paramount.

Vaccination Policy (Updated: 1/11/2022)

All Arkansas Symphony Orchestra employees, including musicians, staff, and stage crew working in the presence of ASO musicians, must keep up to date with their vaccinations, meaning additional vaccinations are received once authorized or approved for use in the U.S., e.g., booster shots are received after completing the primary COVID-19 vaccination series (at least five months after the primary vaccination series for Pfizer and Moderna or at least two months after the primary vaccination series for J&J/Janssen).

If an employee is not up to date with vaccinations by February 1, 2022 or is unvaccinated (requiring a medical or religious exemption), that employee will be required to provide the Artistic Operations Manager with a negative result from a PCR test taken within the last 72 hours prior to the first rehearsal of each concert week.

Please forward vaccination records as they are updated to Leanne Day-Simpson, Artistic Operations Manager.

As of March 19, 2022, use of masks is optional.

The situation will be monitored and this policy will be updated as more information is received.

Vaccination Policy 8/26/2021

The Society and the Players Committee worked together on the following vaccination policy that will apply to musicians.

All Arkansas Symphony Orchestra employees, including musicians, staff, and stage crew working in the presence of ASO musicians, must be vaccinated. In the event that accommodations are needed based on a health reason or a sincerely held religious belief, that person must meet with Leanne Day-Simpson (Artistic Operations Manager) or Christina Littlejohn (Chief Executive Officer) for additional information. Regardless, an unvaccinated person will be required to provide the Artistic Operations Manager with a negative result from a PCR test taken within the last 72 hours prior to the first rehearsal of each concert week. The situation will be monitored and this policy will be updated as more information is received.

A vaccination policy is already in place for staff, crew and audience members. Staff members are required to be vaccinated. Crew will be required to be vaccinated if they are present one hour before, during, and one hour after services at which musicians are present. Audience members will be asked for proof of vaccination. In the event that medical exceptions need to be made, there will be a section in the last rows of the upper tier for these audience members. Guest artists and guest conductors will also be asked to show proof of vaccination or a negative test result.

Robinson Center is requiring that masks be worn.