

## NYSSMA Conferencing Policies for Public Health and Safety

Updated: November 3, 2021

NYSSMA is dedicated to ensuring conference registrants can enjoy a safe conference environment. The following policies are intended to protect your health as well as to ensure the wellbeing of your colleagues, and are guided by NYSSMA's commitment to science, public health, safety, and evidence-based medical practice. These policies are subject to modification at any time based on new information.

- These policies cover the 2021 NYSSMA conference including:  
**2021 NYSSMA Winter Conference and All-State Concerts, December 2-5, 2021, Rochester, New York**
- NYSSMA requires all persons who wish to attend the Winter Conference to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Fully vaccinated means at least 14 days have passed since having received the second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines or a single-dose of the Johnson & Johnson Janssen vaccine.
- NYSSMA requires all attendees and staff to comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local health and safety laws and directives, as well as any guidelines of NYSSMA, the conference hotel, and other presentation/social venues, including with respect to face coverings and physical distancing.
- NYSSMA requires masks to be worn over the **mouth and nose** inside the conference hotel and other presentation/social venues for all attendees and staff, regardless of vaccination status, except as necessary when eating or drinking, or when giving a presentation.
- Attendees and staff shall not attend the NYSSMA Winter Conference on any day when experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, including fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, fatigue, body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, runny nose, nausea, or vomiting. Attendees with these symptoms should isolate and test by contacting a local healthcare provider.
- Attendees may request an exemption from the vaccination requirement for medical or religious reasons by submitting a letter and support documentation to NYSSMA via email at [conference@nyssma.org](mailto:conference@nyssma.org). Review of exemption requests will take approximately ten business days with oversight by a panel of NYSSMA members and staff. Due to the needed processing time, exemption requests must be received **no later than 12 noon Eastern Time on Friday, November 19**. Exemption requests will not be considered for on-site registrants. Those whose exemption requests are approved must provide proof of a negative PCR test or Rapid-Antigen test within 72 hours of conference check-in.
  - Medical exemptions:
    - May be granted if a licensed physician, licensed nurse practitioner, or licensed midwife (caring for a pregnant attendee) certifies in writing that such vaccination may be detrimental to the attendee's health or is otherwise medically contraindicated.
    - Must include a statement indicating which vaccine may be detrimental, including a detailed explanation of the valid medical basis for such determination, and the length of time for which it may be detrimental.
    - Should be based on the most recent guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and its Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.
    - Must be submitted separately for each vaccine from which they request a medical exemption.
    - Will be granted on a temporary basis up to the point when the condition supporting an exemption is expected to resolve or expire.
    - May include a request for the attendee to abide by additional, or alternative, safety measures to

mitigate potential risk for others.

- Religious exemptions:
  - a. May be granted if an attendee certifies in writing that they hold genuine and sincere religious beliefs which are contrary to the practice of immunization.
  - b. Must describe with specificity the religious principles that guide the objection to immunization.
  - c. Will not be granted when opposition to the immunization is medical, scientific, political, philosophical, ethical, or otherwise secular rather than religious in nature.
  - d. May require additional supporting documentation.
  - e. May include a request for the attendee to abide by additional, or alternative, safety measures to mitigate potential risk for others.
- All conference registrants are required to attest willingness to comply with policies and acknowledge or sign a waiver of liability prior to receiving their registration materials and being granted access to the conference. Conference registrants in violation of NYSSMA policies will be asked to leave the event with no refund issued.