

Galen College of Nursing: Student COVID-19 Medical or Religious Exemption or COVID-19 Vaccine Deferral Request Process

I want to request a medical or religious exemption or a COVID-19 vaccine deferral. Where can I find the document that I need to submit?

Go to the site where you currently upload your immunization information, i.e., Verified Credentials or CastleBranch or you can find these forms on the Galen website by visiting [Current Students](#)

- **Religious Exemption** – must be signed by your religious leader and notarized.
- **Medical Exemption** – must be completed by a MD, DO, APRN, or PA.
- **COVID-19 vaccine deferral** – you may request a vaccine deferral, using the Medical Exemption form, if any of the following conditions apply to you :
 - Acute COVID-19 infection documented in the past 90 days
 - Receipt of monoclonal/polyclonal COVID-19 antibody treatment within the past 90 days
 - Receipt of high titer COVID-19 antibody treatment (Convalescent Plasma) within the past 90 days
- **Clinical Immunization Acknowledgement** – must be completed by all students submitting an exemption or deferral request.
- **KY State Declination** – must be completed by any student submitting a medical or religious exemption who attends a campus in Kentucky.

Where do I upload my completed documents?

Upload your completed documents in Verified Credentials or CastleBranch.

What will happen after I upload my completed forms?

Once your exemption form is successfully uploaded into Verified Credentials or CastleBranch, the Exemption Review Committee will be notified and will review your request.

The Exemption Review Committee will review the submitted documentation to determine whether it meets the following criteria:

- **Medical Exemption:** Has the document been accurately and fully completed by the student's primary care provider?
- **Religious Exemption:** Is the documentation complete? Does the exemption express a religious belief or practice for requesting to abstain from obtaining the COVID 19 vaccine?

The Exemption Review Committee may deny a request and/or request further documentation be provided to meet the above standards as dictated by Galen community partners. The decision of the Exemption Review Committee is final.

How will I know the status of my medical or religious exemption or COVID-19 vaccine deferral request?

Students will be notified via email of the decision of the Exemption Review Committee and will be reminded of their responsibilities related to their exemption.

Will approval of my medical or religious exemption or Covid-19 vaccine deferral by the Exemption Review Committee guarantee that I may attend clinical at a healthcare facility.

No. Approval by Galen's Exemption Review Committee will *not* guarantee that you will be able to attend clinical at a healthcare facility. Students must meet all requirements mandated by a healthcare facility, which may vary by facility.

Will I ever be required to fill out additional medical or religious exemption or Covid-19 vaccine deferral forms?

Yes. It may be necessary for you to fill out a medical or religious exemption or Covid-19 vaccine deferral form, if required by a healthcare facility in which you are assigned to attend clinical. You will be notified if this is required.

Will I be provided an alternative clinical site if I do not meet a healthcare facility's clinical requirements?

No. Nursing education programs are mandated by boards of nursing as well as accreditors to provide students with clinical experiences. They are not obligated to provide substitute or alternate clinical experiences based on a student's request or vaccine preference (NCSBN, 2021).

Who should I contact if I have questions about any of these forms?

Contact the College Health Nurse, Johanna Coursey, MSN, APRN

Reference

National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (27 September 2021). Policy Brief: Clinical Experiences for Unvaccinated Nursing Students. Retrieved from <https://www.ncsbn.org/PolicyBriefUnvaccinatedNursingStudents.pdf>