



July 30, 2021

MEMORANDUM

TO: Public and Private Higher Education Presidents, Chancellors, Directors, and Administrators
FROM: Stephanie M. Rodriguez, Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Higher Education Department
CC: Dr. Patricia Trujillo, Deputy Secretary, New Mexico Higher Education Department
Gerald Hoehne, Director, Capital Projects Division, New Mexico Higher Education Department
RE: COVID-19 Update and Information

All public and private higher education institutions and special schools in New Mexico must follow guidance issued by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC). Additionally, we request that you remain diligent in preventing COVID-19 infection and spread by joining the State of New Mexico in encouraging vaccinations amongst your colleagues, faculty, staff, and students. Below are links to the guidance, handbook, and vaccination toolkit for your use.

1. [Guidance for Institutions of Higher Education](#)
2. [ED COVID-19 Handbook: Strategies for Safe Operation and Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Higher Education Students, Faculty, and Staff](#) (Volume 3 –2021)
3. [COVID-19 Vaccine Toolkit for Institutions of Higher Education, Community Colleges, and Technical Schools](#)

Increasing vaccination rates is key to ensuring the safe operation of college campuses and educational facilities in the state. To assist all sectors in this effort, increase the state's vaccination rate, and ensure the health and wellbeing of faculty, staff, and students, the State of New Mexico announced a second round of \$100 incentives to promote COVID-19 vaccinations. The incentive begins August 2 and extends through the end of the month. Participation is especially critical for the 18 to 24 age groups which are currently only fully vaccinated at 41 percent. Please notify your student population that [select pharmacies](#) and clinics are offering same-day walk-in appointments until August 12th for anyone over the age of 12. Additionally, New Mexicans can visit www.vaccinenm.org to register.

Yesterday, July 29, 2021, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham implemented a vaccination policy for state government employees administratively attached to the New Mexico State Personnel Office, including employees at the New Mexico Higher Education Department. This executive order does not apply to public higher education institutions or special schools; however, we strongly encourage all colleges, universities, and special schools to consider similar measures in order to prioritize the health and safety of their students, workforce, and communities and to limit disruptions in operations, such as a rapid response.

A special thank you to the higher education institutions and special schools that have adopted the use of masks indoors. We as a state agency have also followed suit. If you or your colleagues at your college or university have any questions, please contact the agency via email at NMHED.COVID@state.nm.us.