



August 19, 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: Public Health Order Update

Statewide Mask Requirements

To mitigate the state's rising tide of COVID-19 infections and hospitalizations, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham and the New Mexico Department of Health announced that the State of New Mexico will temporarily re-implement a statewide requirement that masks must be worn in indoor spaces accessed by members of the public, including students in education settings, regardless of vaccination status. This requirement will take effect Friday, August 20, 2021.

Vaccination Policies for Public and Private Higher Education Institutions

Earlier this month, Governor 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. Additionally, a public health order was issued this week requiring all employees in private, public, and charter schools in New Mexico be vaccinated against COVID-19 or participate in COVID-19 testing and submit results on a weekly basis. The public health order applies to any school instructing students in a K-12 setting. It does not apply to public or private higher education institutions; however, the State of New Mexico and the New Mexico Higher Education Department strongly encourage all colleges, universities, and vocational programs to consider similar measures to prioritize the health and safety of their students, workforce, and communities and to limit disruptions in operations, such as a rapid response.

Vaccination Policies for High-Risk Settings

COVID-19 vaccinations are now required for all employees and individuals administering services in hospitals, congregate care facilities, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, state correctional facilities, and juvenile justice facilities. This includes students and faculty in healthcare settings and clinical rotations.

Vaccine Incentive Extension

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. New Mexicans who receive a first or second



dose of Pfizer or Moderna – or a first-and-only dose of the Johnson & Johnson (J&J) vaccine – between August 2 and 31 will be eligible. In order to receive the incentive, New Mexicans must schedule a second appointment, if applicable, at vaccineNM.org by 5 p.m. on Friday, September 10, 2021. Participation is especially critical for the 18 to 24 age group which is currently fully vaccinated at 42 percent.

Questions

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.