

# NEW MEXICO HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



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December 16, 2020

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Higher Education Presidents, Chancellors, and Administrators  
**FROM:** Stephanie Rodriguez, Acting Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Higher Education Department  
**CC:** Dr. Patricia Trujillo, Deputy Secretary, New Mexico Higher Education Department  
**RE:** Spring 2021 Campus Reopening Guidance

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### Spring Campus Reopening Guidance and Plans

New Mexico's higher education institutions have been diligently working to provide a mix of remote and essential hybrid or in-person classes, service operations, and research efforts during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. The [New Mexico Higher Education Department](#) (NMHED) has worked with each of you to ensure colleges and universities reopen campuses utilizing a measured approach to reduce COVID-19 spread and transmissions.

All campus reopening plans must address a common set of requirements and considerations that ensure adherence to all [public health and executive orders](#), embrace implementation of key mitigation strategies, and prepare institutions to respond to COVID-19 spread on campus. Reopening plans are due to the agency by January 8, 2021, via email to [NMHED.COVID@state.nm.us](mailto:NMHED.COVID@state.nm.us). For the guidance document and an outline of the rubric for assessing plans, please visit [RestartNewMexico.us](https://RestartNewMexico.us).

Critical requirements in the rubric include a start date after January 18 to ensure there is a cohesive effort amongst all education sectors to mitigate a post-holiday surge in COVID-19 cases; proper symptom check implementation amongst all faculty, staff members, and students who visit campus or other sites for essential services and essential courses; limited residence hall occupancy in order to adequately respond to an outbreak; the inclusion of a semester calendar; and the percentage of courses that will take place online.

### Reporting Positive COVID-19 Case(s) on Campus

All colleges and universities must continue to [report all positive COVID-19 cases](#) to the NMHED. We will continue reporting in the same manner as last semester to ensure there is a seamless reporting and response system among all state agencies – the NMHED, the [New Mexico Department of Health](#) (NMDOH) and the [New Mexico Environment Department](#) (NMED).

Please note that the spread of COVID-19 remains a statewide emergency and the [State of New Mexico](#) and NMDOH are diligently working to release [COVID-19 vaccine](#) information as it becomes available to the public. Hospitals and health care providers across New Mexico are strained in responding to the increase in cases and deaths caused by the virus. As positive cases continue to impact higher education both on and off campus, it is critical that your higher education institution continue to support remote work throughout the semester. We must do our part in stopping the spread of the virus in our communities.

## **Questions**

The NMHED appreciates your ongoing support of the agency, public health orders, and executive orders. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the agency via email at [NMHED.COVID@state.nm.us](mailto:NMHED.COVID@state.nm.us).

## **Other Links and Information**

### ***Signs and Symptoms***

Living in a COVID-positive world requires discipline from all of us. In order for the rate of spread of COVID-19 to decrease, it is imperative that New Mexicans stay home as much as possible. Signs and symptoms of COVID-19 include: cough, fever, shortness of breath, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, and/or loss of taste or smell.

If any faculty, staff members, or students present any of these symptoms or if they have been in contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, they should self-quarantine and get tested as soon as possible.

### ***Other COVID-19 Statewide Websites***

1. [COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions](#)
2. [New Mexico's Red to Green Framework](#)
3. [COVID-19 Vaccine Information](#)
4. [COVID-Safe Practices](#)

### ***COVID-19 Statewide Response Referral Numbers***

1. Coronavirus Information Hotline: 1-833-551-0518
2. Coronavirus Health Hotline: 1-855-600-3453
3. Crisis and Access Hotline: 1-855-662-7474

### ***Other Education and Child Care Questions***

1. K-12 Public Education: 1-833-415-0567
2. Early Childhood Education and Care: 1-800-691-9067

### ***Agency Information and Resources***

1. [Restart New Mexico: Reopening Plans, Guidance, and Memos](#)
2. [Higher Education COVID-19 Resources](#)