

NEW MEXICO HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM
GOVERNOR

STEPHANIE RODRIGUEZ
ACTING CABINET SECRETARY

January 11, 2021

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: State of New Mexico COVID-19 Allocation Plan

As the State of New Mexico and the New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) begin to distribute the COVID-19 vaccine and as higher education institutions prepare for the spring semester, the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) is providing ongoing guidance and support surrounding COVID-19 vaccine distribution within the higher education sector. The NMDOH released the [State of New Mexico COVID-19 Allocation Plan](#) last week, and announced the individuals in group 1B are now eligible to receive the vaccine.

Plans are thoroughly evaluated and approved by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham and Secretary Designate Tracie Collins, and conversations are ongoing with the consultation of cabinet secretaries. I encourage you to read the full list of priority populations in Phase 1A, Phase 1B, and Phase 1C. Discussions around critical considerations are ongoing with the NMDOH and all cabinet agencies. We will inform you as new information becomes available.

Phase 1A (page three) is strictly focused on frontline workers who provide healthcare services and direct in-person service to patients and vulnerable populations. Phase 1B encompasses a variety of citizens such as persons 75 or older, 16 years or older with at least one chronic condition, frontline essential workers, and other vulnerable populations. On page four of the document, you will see many employees within higher education are included in Phase 1B, including but not limited to:

- Early Education and K-12 educators/staff and **other personnel in educational institutions needed on-site to support in-person learning**
- Public transit workers
- Personnel who provide in-person services necessary to maintain the safety and sanitation of residences and businesses including security services, custodial services, and other skill trades
- Workers not covered in Phase 1A in research centers and laboratories who are unable to work remotely and/or telework

Please inform your students and staff members, especially students and faculty in healthcare settings and clinical rotations (register as "Healthcare"), to preregister for the vaccine via the [COVID-19 Vaccine Registration System](#) if they haven't done so already. Any New Mexico resident can preregister using the portal, but distribution will take place in order of priority and available supply as determined by state guidelines. More information about the COVID-19 vaccine and distribution criteria can be found [here](#).

As individuals register for the COVID-19 vaccine, they must do so in line with their occupation. For example, faculty should register as “Education” in the system, whereas public safety officials on campus should register as “Public Safety – Non-Medical First Responder” to ensure they are categorized correctly. If you have any questions regarding these occupation categories, please email NMHED.COVID@state.nm.us or call the COVID-19 Vaccine Hotline at 1-855-600-3453.

I want to acknowledge your significant efforts to mitigate COVID-19 spread within your respective higher education institutions and communities. It has been a heavy lift and although our work is not done, the distribution of vaccines across New Mexico brings hope for relief to 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.