

NMSU NOW

Our dynamic pandemic action plan



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New Mexico State University
now.nmsu.edu

Key updates & quick-reference (updated 09/16/21)

Contacts to know

- ◆ Report your positive COVID-19 test result: [covid19.nmsu.edu/self-report](https://nmsu.edu/covid19/self-report)
- ◆ Disclose a positive case reported to you: Aggie Health and Wellness, campus_health@nmsu.edu, 575-646-1512
- ◆ Upload proof of vaccination or test result: [VaxTrax.nmsu.edu](https://nmsu.edu/vaxtrax)
- ◆ Questions about NMSU system pandemic response: covid19@nmsu.edu
- ◆ Restock classroom disinfecting supplies: Facilities and Services, askfs@nmsu.edu or 575-646-7114
- ◆ Buy COVID-19 protective supplies: Aggie Service Center, asc@nmsu.edu or 575-646-2000
- ◆ Report a student conduct concern (mask-wearing, etc.): Dean of Students, DOS@nmsu.edu, 575-646-1722
- ◆ Faculty resources on absences, Crimson Commitment, other syllabus info: [provost.nmsu.edu/faculty-and-staff-resources/syllabus/index.html](https://nmsu.edu/provost/faculty-and-staff-resources/syllabus/index.html)

Vaccination & testing protocols (updated 09/30/21)

The New Mexico State University system continues to prioritize being agile and adaptive in its response to the changing pandemic landscape and evolving guidance from state and federal officials. **All NMSU system employees at all campuses and offices and most students have the choice to either provide proof of vaccination or proof of a weekly negative COVID-19 test beginning Sept. 30, 2021.** This applies to both in-person employees and those who are working remotely, in accordance with new guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

Documenting your compliance

Proof of COVID-19 vaccination or weekly proof of COVID-19 testing must be uploaded at [vaxtrax.nmsu.edu](https://nmsu.edu/vaxtrax). The site is only accessible through NMSU's private network, so users must either use an on-campus computer or use NMSU's Virtual Private Network to access it. For information about accessing NMSU's VPN, visit [vpn.nmsu.edu](https://nmsu.edu/vpn).

Employees or students choosing to test weekly should begin uploading results after Sept. 30. The first testing upload must be complete by midnight on Oct. 7, 2021 – one week after the requirement is effective – and every week by midnight on Thursdays thereafter. Weekly COVID-19 test results must be from a test date within the past seven days, and must come from either antigen or PCR tests – antibody tests are not acceptable.

A **user guide** for accessing and using the VaxTrax portal is available now in English, and will soon be available in Spanish.

Designated staff within Human Resource Services and the Dean of Students Office will monitor vaccine and testing compliance through the VaxTrax portal, and students or employees who do not provide appropriate documentation will be subject to corrective action in accordance with the **Student Code of Conduct** or the **COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols**.

In the case of employee non-compliance, direct supervisors will be notified and given direction on how to address the situation. If an employee is on leave and is able to submit test results while they are out, they should continue to do so. If not, employees may submit their test result prior to the next Thursday deadline upon returning to work.

Individuals who have tested positive prior to Sept. 30 and are still within their 90 day “no-test period” should upload the most recent test result using the date the test was received. The VaxTrax system will automatically document the testing exemption for 90 days. Individuals testing positive after Sept. 30 should also report that positive test, along with the date of the test, which will trigger the 90 day exemption period in VaxTrax to begin.

Expectations for NMSU-O, dual credit, and adult education students

Students enrolled in NMSU Online courses only are exempt from the vaccine and testing protocols, provided they do not live on campus and will not visit campus at any time to fulfill program requirements or participate in activities.

Dual credit students or early high school education students are not required to adhere to the vaccination and testing policy. They must follow their school district policy and adhere to the NMSU visitor commitment while on NMSU system campuses.

Adult education programs that do not require a banner ID for credit enrollment are not required to adhere to the vaccination and testing policy. They must adhere to the NMSU visitor commitment while on NMSU system campuses.

Mask-wearing guidance

In alignment with **updated guidance from the CDC** and recommendations from New Mexico Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham, masks are required at all indoor NMSU system locations and offices around the state. This includes our Las Cruces, Doña Ana Community College, Alamogordo, Grants, and Carlsbad campuses, as well as New Mexico Department of Agriculture and Cooperative Extension Service offices and Agricultural Science Centers.

This indoor mask requirement applies to all classrooms, labs, meeting rooms, vehicles and other spaces, and to all faculty, staff, students, and visitors to NMSU campuses and offices, regardless of vaccination status or social distancing opportunities.

Recent studies indicate that vaccinated people can still transmit the coronavirus. Wearing a mask reduces transmission of all variants and keeps our community safer. Please be mask-ready. If you need a mask, ask within your department and one will be provided to you.

We received word from the NM Higher Education Department that our faculty exception to the indoor mask requirement could not continue. Effective immediately, instructors must remain masked while teaching. This is a change from the previous practice of allowing instructors who were fully vaccinated to remove their masks while teaching, if they were able to maintain a six-foot distance from students. The state’s latest **public health order** extends the indoor mask requirement for everyone, regardless of vaccination status, through at least mid-October.

We continue to monitor guidance from the CDC and the New Mexico Department of Health, and will update our requirements as that guidance evolves and as conditions warrant.

Individuals with special considerations regarding face coverings should work with a supervisor, **Human Resource Services**, the **Office of Institutional Equity**, or **Student Accessibility Services** to explore potential accommodations. Vaccination status and use of face coverings should never be used to discriminate or stigmatize.

Approval for an exemption

Some members of our community will not be able to wear a face covering in situations when one is expected by NMSU guidelines. Others may want to document a medical or religious exemption to the vaccine protocol. Employees seeking an exemption should notify their supervisor and contact the **Office of Institutional Equity** at 575-646-3635 for consideration. Part of the exception approval process will include protocols for the employee to follow (telework, change of office space or alternate controls) to help protect the health of other members of the NMSU community. Medical vaccine exemption requests for students must be submitted to Disability Access Services in the Dean of Students Office at **das@nmsu.edu** or 575-646-1722. Religious exemption requests for students must be submitted to the Office of Institutional Equity at **equity@nmsu.edu**.

Faculty, staff and students approved for a vaccination exemption must upload the exemption documentation into VaxTrax and must adhere to the weekly antigen or PCR testing, with the first weekly test due by midnight on Thursday, Oct. 7, 2021.

Vaccine resources

COVID-19 vaccines are available at no cost to employees and students through many sources in New Mexico and elsewhere. In Las Cruces, **Aggie Health and Wellness Center** offers free vaccine appointments, which can be scheduled by calling 575-646-1512. Local pharmacies and grocery stores across the state also offer the vaccine. Visit **VaccineNM.org** to schedule a vaccine appointment today.

Testing resources

Free at-home testing is available to New Mexico residents from **Vault Health**. El Paso residents can find testing information at **www.epstrong.org/testing.php**. Elsewhere in Texas, visit the **Texas Department of State Health Services** for information on testing sites. In other states, contact your state or local department of health for more information.

In addition, COVID-19 testing is currently available at no cost from many providers, including **Doña Ana Community College's East Mesa campus** and **Aggie Health and Wellness Center** at the Las Cruces campus (*for symptomatic students, faculty, and staff only*).

Presbyterian Medical Services provides free antigen testing at its **Family Health Center locations** in Alamogordo, Carlsbad and Grants.

Other testing sites across New Mexico, many of which offer testing at no cost, are listed on the **New Mexico Department of Health** site.

COVID-19 health & safety protocols (09/14/21)

Because COVID-19 is a communicable disease that spreads primarily from person to person, all employees, students and visitors must take personal responsibility for their own health, protect the health of others, and keep the Aggie community safe from the spread of COVID-19 and other illnesses.

Every member of the NMSU community should exercise common courtesy and patience when interacting with others. Vaccination status and use of face coverings should never be used to discriminate or stigmatize.

To minimize the public health risk of COVID-19 at **NMSU, students, staff, and faculty are strongly encouraged to become vaccinated as soon as possible**, and all NMSU officials, affiliates, visitors, and employees are expected to comply with the following COVID-19 Health and Safety Protocols, in accordance with **ARP 16.32**:

- ◆ I will become vaccinated against COVID-19 as soon as possible, but no later than Sept. 30, 2021.
- ◆ If I am unable or unwilling to become vaccinated, I will provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test on a weekly basis as directed.
- ◆ I will follow state and federal guidance and any additional or different guidance required by NMSU relating to mask-wearing and other health safety measures based on my vaccine status.
- ◆ I will stay home if I have any of the **symptoms of COVID-19**.
- ◆ If I have a positive test for COVID-19, I will:
 - ▶ immediately notify my supervisor and **report my positive test online**.
 - ▶ fully participate in contact tracing.

Employees failing to meet any of the above conditions of employment will be subject to corrective action, commensurate with the seriousness of the health and safety risks posed, which may involve warnings or more serious consequences, such as suspension without pay, demotion, or termination of employment. For the protection of the public's health, safety and welfare, violations by other members of the NMSU community will similarly be addressed with appropriate administrative or criminal sanctions. Recommendations relating to COVID-safe practices will be updated in alignment with guidance from the **New Mexico Department of Health**. Changes will be communicated to the university community through our **NMSU Now newsletter, campus-wide memos**, and other communications as appropriate.

NMSU continually reassesses and adjusts its operational plans based on guidance from both the **New Mexico Department of Health** and the **New Mexico Higher Education Department**. Our campuses will follow this guidance, and may implement more-restrictive measures if data received or collected by NMSU indicates it is in the best interest of our students and employees.

Reporting & responding to a positive case

Any student or employee of the NMSU system or affiliated agencies who has tested positive for COVID-19 **must report** through the **online portal** immediately. The positive individual may not come to work or class and must follow **CDC guidance** regarding quarantine or isolation.

When NMSU is notified of a person with a positive test for COVID-19, Aggie Health and Wellness Center (AHWC) or the affected branch campus will initiate contact tracing and coordinate the process to notify exposed individuals (those who have been within 6 feet for 15 minutes) and disinfect buildings. **The identity of the COVID-19 positive person will not be disclosed.** Supervisors of staff who may have been in the affected building (e.g. Facilities, ICT) will be alerted so they can alert employees as needed.

Once a report of a case is made, AHWC will identify and notify close contacts and provide additional guidance as needed. **COVID-19 positive individuals do not need to notify possible contacts themselves or lock down buildings or departments.** Unless otherwise directed by contact tracers at Aggie Health and Wellness Center, it is not necessary to pivot temporarily to online or hybrid instruction due to a positive case in the class.

Community college employees and students should report a positive test to the local COVID-19 contact point for their campus:

- ◆ Alamogordo campus: **Joan Hale** (575-439-3793)
- ◆ Carlsbad campus: **Karla Volpi** (575-234-9216)
- ◆ Doña Ana Community College campus: **Amy Collins** (575-528-7068)
- ◆ Grants campus: **Anne Semrau** (505-287-6661)

Cleaning after a positive test notification

Supervisors or department heads or instructors who receive notification of a positive test should instruct the student or employee to self-report through the NMSU portal found at **now.nmsu.edu**. AHWC or the local COVID-19 contact point for the campus will rapidly engage with Facilities Operations to implement enhanced cleaning.

A COVID-19 enhanced cleaning and disinfection protocol developed by EHS&RM will be applied in cases in which a person with COVID-19 spent time in university spaces. Classrooms and general gathering spaces are disinfected nightly. Individual office spaces will be disinfected by coordinating through Lori McKee, Aggie Health & Wellness Center, at **lomckee@nmsu.edu**. The disinfection process follows CDC-approved methods and guidance.

Returning to work or class after exposure to a person who has tested positive:

If a person has been exposed to someone with COVID-19, there is a 14-day period during which they might become infected. That is sometimes called the "incubation period" for the disease. The 14 days run from the last date they had a close contact with the person with COVID-19. **People who have had an exposure must quarantine at home for 14 days unless fully vaccinated, in accordance with CDC guidelines.**

Further information is available here: **Policies for the Prevention and Control of COVID-19 in New Mexico**. Policies on quarantine and isolation are subject to change.

The decision tree shown here is **downloadable** and designed to help you navigate the quarantine or isolation guidance for your specific circumstances:

When can I come back?



I WAS A CLOSE CONTACT OF SOMEONE WHO TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

Close contact in the classroom means you were within 3 feet, without a mask, for a total of 15 minutes or more

Are you fully vaccinated?

YES

Do you have symptoms?

YES

Get tested. Stay home and monitor for symptoms until you receive test results. If your result is negative, you may return to work or class when you no longer have symptoms of illness.

NO

Quarantine at home for 14 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19, and be tested on days 8-10. Watch for fever (100.4 F), cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19. If possible, stay away from people you live with, especially people who are at higher risk for getting very sick from COVID-19, and wear a mask in your home until quarantine is complete.

You do not need to quarantine. However, it's recommended that fully vaccinated people get tested 3-5 days after their exposure, even if they don't have symptoms, and wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until their test result is negative.

I TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

Have you reported your results to NMSU?

YES

Do you have symptoms?

YES

Isolate for a minimum of 10 days from the day of testing, and until at least 24 hours have elapsed with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and most symptoms of COVID-19 are improving (loss of smell or taste may linger).

NO

Report your positive result online at covid19.nmsu.edu/self-report/ right away to start the contact tracing process.

NO

Isolate and monitor for symptoms until 10 days have passed since you had a positive viral test for COVID-19.

Quarantine or isolation?

You **quarantine** when you might have been exposed to the virus. You **isolate** when you have been infected with the virus, even if you don't have symptoms.

For questions about COVID-19, email covid19@nmsu.edu.

What to do if you have a positive case in your area

- ◆ If you are an employee who has had a positive test, you should notify your supervisor and report it to the Aggie Health and Wellness Center by **entering a self-report**. This is the same protocol for branch campuses.
- ◆ Affected areas will receive enhanced cleaning and disinfecting if an individual who regularly enters the area tests positive.
- ◆ You can continue to work unless you are notified that you were identified as a contact by the contact tracing team. If you were identified as a contact, you must self-isolate at home for 10 days, get tested, and follow the guidelines above.

Faculty and staff

Although offices that serve students will be open, we will continue our reduced levels of staffing on campus overall to reduce opportunities for viral spread.

Offices and departments that can operate effectively through telework may continue to do so. Unit return to campus plans should detail employees' arrangements for telework, hoteling of office spaces, and in-person work spaces. NMSU recognizes the importance of employee privacy regarding medical information. A decision tree for supervisors can assist in planning for staffing needs.

We've also developed an **Alternative Work Arrangement (AWA) policy** that promotes flexible employee density on the campus and allows for work to get done productively in remote locations. The options available in AWA include telework, flex time, short-term work modifications, and a compressed work week. **Training modules** have also been developed to assist managers and employees. Additional resources for telework are available at hr.nmsu.edu.

Resources on self-care and emotional wellness support are always available to faculty and staff from NMSU.

- ◆ **Aggie Health and Wellness Center** offers the **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**. EAP is a confidential counseling and referral service available to all NMSU faculty and staff. Call 575-646-6603 for more info.
- ◆ **Well-Being Solutions**, the new employee assistance program from the State of New Mexico, also provides services to eligible employees and their family members. You can schedule up to five free counseling sessions by calling 833-515-0771 or visiting www.guidanceresources.com and using SONMEAP as the web ID.

Research and creativity

NMSU Research continues to follow a phased approach adopted from **Association of Public and Land-grant Universities Council on Research**. Progress along phases is based on COVID-19 data from the CDC and New Mexico Department of Health, plus guidance from state, local, and university administrative policies. Research activities conducted under Phases 1 through 4 require review and prior approval from research unit directors, department heads, deans and the vice president for research (VPR). The detailed plan and timeline are available at research.nmsu.edu.

Using data to understand COVID-19

Each member of the NMSU community should continue to screen their health for COVID-19 symptoms. We have developed an online self-check and self-reporting portal, available on the **homepage** and the now.nmsu.edu site, to help with screening and contact tracing. Students, employees and visitors should perform a daily self-check and, as relevant, register locations visited on campus to help Aggie Health and Wellness contact tracers identify additional potential contacts.

People with who feel ill or have symptoms of COVID-19 must remain at home or in their residence halls. They need to contact a health care provider, get tested for COVID-19, and **report a positive result online**.

- ◆ COVID-19 testing for symptomatic students and employees is available daily at **Aggie Health and Wellness Center**
- ◆ In the Las Cruces area, COVID-19 tests are also available at the **Department of Health Office** and **other sites**.
- ◆ Free home COVID-19 test kits are available to all New Mexico residents. To order a test, visit **learn.vaulthealth.com/nm**.

Monitoring data

NMSU leadership closely monitors daily reports from the New Mexico Department of Health to understand, down to the level of ZIP codes, the trends of COVID-19 in the community. An online **COVID-19 data dashboard** provides a snapshot of that data daily, Monday through Friday, and for each week. These reports help us understand trends in data like new infections, recoveries, and hospital capacity.

A careful review of the data from the fall semester suggests that our campus was successful in preventing widespread outbreaks of COVID-19 during the 2020-21 academic year. As COVID-19 cases in Doña Ana County rose, we saw a corresponding, but much lower, rise of cases on campus in employees and students.

Responding to a surge in COVID-19 cases

NMSU administration is committed to limiting campus activities if needed to reduce viral spread. No single measure can capture the risk to public health during a pandemic, so we regularly monitor conditions and consult with experts from NMSU plus local and state health authorities, to support science and evidence-based decisions. Possible triggers include:

- ◆ Positivity rates of COVID-19 calculated by population that are higher on any of the campuses than in the county in which they reside, and are deemed a public health risk through consultation with NMSU experts plus local and state health authorities.
- ◆ Local hospitals approach capacity for ICU beds.

In addition to daily monitoring of regional COVID-19 trends, NMSU leadership meets frequently with campus experts to assess trends in critical metrics. These meetings could trigger actions and data collection to better assess the situation. Examples of these actions include:

- ◆ Increased testing for COVID-19 for specific groups of students, faculty and staff, with contact tracing for positive cases;
- ◆ Understanding contributory factors regarding outbreaks possibly associated with on-campus transmission and the rapid response and contact tracing conducted by Aggie Health and Wellness to ensure proper isolation/quarantine protocols;
- ◆ Reviewing related rules and policies;
- ◆ Closing buildings to instruction and restricting campus activities; and
- ◆ Communicating with the campus community.

In the event of a surge in cases or a change in state or federal guidance, the university – or specific departments or classes – could pivot to fully online course delivery and stay-at-home

restrictions. Student services such as residential life and dining would continue as essential services.

Maintaining flexibility

Pedagogies such as hybrid teaching allow faculty to switch from face-to-face to online environment quickly. NMSU's **Alternative Work Arrangements policy** facilitates telework and is supported by a decision tree for managers. Every department must review and revise continuity of operations plans to include plans for a return to telework.

However, Alternative Work Arrangements do not exempt employees from complying with vaccine and testing protocols that take effect Sept. 30, 2021.

Communication and information sharing

Communication and transparency are top priorities as we continue to adapt to a changing environment. All members of the NMSU community are encouraged to contact system leaders at **covid19@nmsu.edu** with questions and comments. Your input helps us to understand your questions and concerns.

We'll continue to provide frequent updates on the activities and findings of the Pandemic Action Team; data from the campus, county, and state; changes to policies and guidelines; and any other relevant information. Communication channels include:

- ◆ NMSU Now – Pandemic Action Team Report [**Subscribe**]
- ◆ Family Outreach Home [**Visit**]
- ◆ Family Outreach Newsletter [**Subscribe**]
- ◆ Presidential town hall sessions [**View archive**]
- ◆ NMSU Hotline announcements [**Subscribe**]
- ◆ President's Communication and Dan's Dispatch [**Subscribe**]
- ◆ Campus leadership memos [**Visit**]
- ◆ Social media posts [**Facebook**] [**Twitter**] [**Instagram**]

Travel guidelines

Decisions regarding travel must be made in accordance with **current New Mexico travel guidance**. Travel to **high-risk locations** is discouraged.

Decisions about domestic travel should be made at the supervisor level, according to normal university policies and procedures. Decisions about international travel should be routed through the Office of the Provost.

When using university vehicles or traveling on university business, unless you are traveling alone in the vehicle, all occupants must wear a mask regardless of vaccination status. When possible, windows will be rolled down in order to provide maximum ventilation. If weather or dust make it impractical or hazardous to keep windows down, each driver will ensure that air within the cab is being ventilated rather than recirculated by the vehicle's air conditioning

system. This does not apply to open air utility vehicles, although individuals may always choose to wear a mask in these vehicles, as well.

Questions related to education abroad, including faculty led international programs (FLIPs), should be directed to Education Abroad at 575-646-5107 or to educationabroad@nmsu.edu.

Questions related to National Student Exchange should be directed to the Office of Experiential Learning at 575-646-5107 or to Kari Cena, National Student Exchange Coordinator at klrankin@nmsu.edu.

Travel resources

- ◆ [CDC guidelines for travel](#)
- ◆ [NMDOH travel recommendations](#)
- ◆ [Public Health Orders](#)

Facility readiness

Classrooms and public spaces at NMSU will operate at their full capacity beginning in the fall semester. All staff, faculty, and students are required to follow the latest guidance on mask-wearing based on vaccination status. Those who are unable to be vaccinated must continue to wear a mask in indoor settings, in accordance with CDC guidelines.

Students or employees who wish to request accommodations because they are unable to become vaccinated for medical or religious reasons should contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) or the [Office of Institutional Equity](#) for assistance.

Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems

Facilities and Services has reviewed all HVAC systems to ensure they are operating at their peak. Assessment and performance testing noted:

- ◆ Overall system type, location, and age
- ◆ Mechanical condition
- ◆ Equipment performance
- ◆ Areas served
- ◆ Filtration technology
- ◆ Humidity control
- ◆ Air volume control
- ◆ Fresh air type
- ◆ Airflow stations
- ◆ CO₂ monitoring
- ◆ Reserve ventilation capacity

Instructional readiness

Our **Academic Technology** team has created FAQs, workshops, and other resources to help both faculty and students get the most out of their online and hybrid teaching and learning experiences.

A **syllabus generator** and additional syllabus resources are now available online for all campuses. Updates have been made to prioritize class content and utilize a **Syllabus Addendum** for additional information. A new **Student Resources & Policy** page is a one-stop resource for faculty and students containing information and links regarding student services, grading policies and important contact information. Updated COVID-19 Suggested Classroom Management guidelines and other resources are also available. For questions on syllabus resources, contact Carley Casey at carleycc@nmsu.edu.

Classroom spaces

Information about the availability and capacity of classroom spaces available for classes or meetings is available through the **AdAstra system**.

At the Las Cruces campus, outdoor instructional spaces have been created using tents, and additional temporary shade structures are set up across campus to provide areas for students to rest, eat or study outdoors between classes.

Tent locations are noted on our **NMSU COVID 19 Las Cruces Campus Map**, available on our **Facilities and Services Space Planning** page.

Classroom technology

Many classrooms on the Las Cruces campus have upgraded technology that allow classrooms to be used for hybrid synchronous online delivery. Faculty can use Zoom to broadcast their classroom sessions to students who are not physically in the classroom, as well as record the lecture for future viewing. ICT and **Instructional Media Services** have resources to support using Zoom and other technology in the classroom.

In addition to wireless internet access available in campus buildings, **AggieAir wireless hotspots** are in many outdoor locations around the Las Cruces campus, including open tents throughout campus, green areas, food courts, parking lots and outdoor seating areas.

COVID-19 safety in classrooms

When it comes to enforcing mask compliance and social distancing in the classroom, we've created a convenient guide for faculty, **available online for download**. In short, faculty should start by discreetly reminding any student without a mask of the policies, and request that they wear a mask. If they refuse, ask them to leave. If the non-compliant student refuses to leave, you may choose to dismiss class or call the NMSU Police department for assistance in de-escalating the situation, and follow up with a referral to the Dean of Students.

Department heads must communicate with faculty about their rights, responsibilities and the resources available to them regarding handling confrontation during a class. At the start of the

semester, faculty and instructors should review the latest face covering expectations for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals.

Additional classroom management, syllabus, and attendance resources are available from the Provost's Office **Syllabus Resources** page. This includes an **FAQ for faculty** on attendance standards and other COVID-related topics.

Instructional delivery

During the schedule creation process, flexibility to instructional delivery allows social distancing and provides the ability to move instruction to partially or fully online platforms, if necessary. Departments may choose to apply the in-person or hybrid model when it is pedagogically necessary to have in-person instruction and/or assessment. Examples include music lessons or ensembles, sports medicine courses and lab sections. Hybrid course delivery can be implemented in multiple ways. Some classes may rotate students through, with students assigned to attend in person on certain days and view lectures either synchronously or asynchronously on other days. If physical presence in the classroom is a preference of students, but not a requirement, departments may choose to have two cross-listed sections of the same course in which one section meets in a technology assisted classroom and the other meets synchronously online.

Once the course schedule is established and the semester is underway, permanent changes to course delivery modality are not permitted. However, if faculty are symptomatic or waiting for test results, **temporarily** moving a class to online synchronous delivery is a good option. This is viewed as a temporary relocation, not a shift to hybrid or blending learning. Providing engaging learning experiences that are consistent with course learning objectives is the priority. Stoppgap strategies to accommodate emerging circumstances may have to include some use of online learning.

Faculty should consult with their Department Heads if they need to further clarify what is an appropriate stopgap strategy and what is truly hybrid course delivery.

Some definitions:

- ◆ **100% online asynchronous delivery:** Students complete work independently, on their own schedule, no matter what time of day. Students are given deadlines by which they need to login and complete assignments.
- ◆ **100% online synchronous delivery:** Classes occur on set schedules through remote delivery. Students and instructors are online at the same time, and lectures, discussions, and presentations take place at specific hours. All students must be online at that time in order to participate in the class.
- ◆ **Hybrid (a combination of online and in-person):** Content delivery incorporates more than one modality, e.g., face-to-face **and** remote synchronous or asynchronous delivery. Face-to-face attendance is limited and may include alternating in-person and online synchronous or asynchronous attendance; may also provide recordings of lectures or experiential components for later reference to supplement concurrent transmission of lectures or experiential components. All students participate in all delivery modalities.

Schedule types that appear when registering for classes at **my.nmsu.edu** include:

- ◆ **HY:** Online with Req In Person Mtgs (online with required in-person meetings)

- ◆ **ONL:** Online with Synchronous Mtgs (100% online with synchronous meetings)
- ◆ **WB:** Online no Synchronous Mtgs (100% online asynchronous)
- ◆ **CL:** Classroom/Lecture (fully in-person)
- ◆ **LB:** Lab (in-person labs)
- ◆ **IND:** Independent Meeting
- ◆ **PC:** Practicum or Clinical
- ◆ **TD:** Thesis or Dissertation

Note for students in clinical programs

Special precautions are required for students and faculty in clinical and other programs (such as nursing, allied health, athletic training, communication disorders, band, or student teaching). These precautions are unique to each program and are guided by the program's accreditation or governing authority, as well as medical and public health guidance. The university will provide oversight of these arrangements as appropriate.

Aggie Student Life

Public health recommendations will continue to guide our plans regarding everything from club meetings to attendance at sporting events. Our Student Life office continues to create safe ways for all students to engage in the activities that make college life vibrant.

Clubs, lectures, fraternities, sororities, study sessions, intramurals, and other activities that occur in person must follow recommended public health practices.

NMSU will provide in-person activities to the extent that it is safe and practical to do so. Field trips and other experiential learning activities will occur where possible. We expect all of these activities to adhere to the precautions recommended by state and local health authorities.

Athletics

The NMSU system supports the university's continuation of athletics in the 2021-2022 academic year. Timing and format depend on conditions and direction from the state of New Mexico, **National Collegiate Athletic Association** (NCAA) and the **Western Athletic Conference** (WAC).

Athletic events will allow spectators at 100 percent capacity. Decisions about changes for sporting events, including the presence of spectators at events, will be made in accordance to guidance from the NCAA, WAC, university leadership and state and local officials.

Aggie Health and Wellness

The **Aggie Health and Wellness Center** offers daily health and wellness services to the NMSU community. This includes **counseling** for students provided by seeking help with a crisis, mental health, and personal growth and well-being. Services are free and confidential to NMSU Las Cruces campus students.

The Aggie Health and Wellness Center offers both in-person and telehealth services for access to medical and counseling providers, laboratory, and pharmacy services. Appointments for

telehealth screening are available at 575-646-1512 from 8 to 11:30 a.m. and 1 to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Appointments can also be made for in-person laboratory services and pharmacy refills.

Aggie Health and Wellness Center also offers COVID-19 vaccines and testing for those with symptoms. Appointments are available by calling 575-646-1512.

Housing and Residential Life

NMSU's Housing and Residential Life office supports a healthy on-campus living environment, and is committed to providing students with a positive, engaging, safe, and supportive campus experience. Our COVID-safe practices are based on advice from NMSU health experts, New Mexico Department of Health, CDC and other resources. We will continue to provide information and education for students and expect they will do their part to stay healthy and protect the health of the NMSU community.

Protecting health

Housing and Residential Life supports healthy habits for resident students. Students who need to isolate or quarantine will be supported by a team of staff members through regular contact and meal delivery. Isolation housing is located in units that are private and separated from other residential areas.

Residents are responsible for keeping their living spaces (rooms, restrooms, and shared areas) clean. Residents must supply their own cleaning supplies and materials. In addition to regular cleaning of rooms, restrooms, and shared areas, residents should wipe down or spray shower, toilet, sink and counter surfaces with disinfecting cleaner frequently and leave restroom doors open for ventilation to dry the restroom.

Residents are responsible for removing trash and placing it in parking lot dumpsters. More specific information for residential students can be found at housing.nmsu.edu.

Dining facilities

In November 2020, NMSU became the first university in Sodexo's portfolio to achieve the **Rise Safe certification**, after passing a 37-point safety and sanitation audit and an independent verification of compliance by Bureau Veritas. It was created to standardize processes and procedures for education, training, safety, sanitation and communications in response to the pandemic and in adherence with CDC guidelines and additional rules set by health officials.

Food service around campus serves the NMSU community with multiple options in ordering and delivery, consistent with the current quality, standards, and regulations. More information about dining options and hours is available at dining.nmsu.edu.

All frontline staff serve as information experts to answer questions on COVID-19 procedures, navigation, and daily menus.

Technological and physical accommodations to reduce the exposure to COVID-19 include:

- ◆ Mobile app ordering
- ◆ New offerings for touchless robotic delivery (Kiwibot) through **Bite Universities app**

Additional efforts can be deployed within 24 hours as required by federal, state, local and NMSU guidelines:

- ◆ Barriers and social distancing signage to control lines
- ◆ Touchless cashiering and acrylic barriers at cashier stations
- ◆ Elimination of self-service and buffet options
- ◆ Menu adaptations to accommodate to-go and delivery items
- ◆ Signage, maps and menus at the entrance to facilities
- ◆ Flexible and layered protective equipment for all employees
- ◆ Additional shaded and outdoor seating for dining near Corbett Center Student Union
- ◆ Tabletop acrylic barriers and social spacing of tables where appropriate

Protecting your health and safety

Cleaning for prevention

NMSU will continue to take appropriate measures to reduce community spread of COVID-19 through **daily enhanced cleaning** and disinfection procedures created by Environmental Health Safety and Risk Management (EHS&RM) based on guidance from the CDC and the NMDOH for cleaning and disinfection.

We can all contribute to a healthier campus by following these general guidelines:

- ◆ Increase the frequency of cleaning and disinfecting, focusing on high-touch surfaces such as residence hall communal rooms, public restrooms, computer labs, exercise rooms, library tables, buttons, handrails, tables, faucets, doorknobs, and shared keyboards. Cleaning and disinfecting daily and between users for shared workstations with attention to these areas helps remove bacteria and viruses, including the virus that causes COVID-19.
- ◆ Practice good hygiene after cleaning:
 - ▶ Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
 - ▶ If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- ◆ Facilities and Services will continue to provide building monitors with disinfecting wipes for classrooms for distribution to instructors. Instructors or building monitors can call the Facilities and Services Work Order Desk, 575-646-7114, if supplies need to be replenished.

Custodial teams clean and sanitize spaces on a **daily basis** in academic buildings, including classrooms, computer labs, and restrooms, including building entryways, break rooms, elevators, conference rooms, and common areas.

Custodial teams use two methods of enhanced cleaning: manual sanitation and disinfection of surfaces throughout the normal work day, as well as daily electrostatic disinfection. Teams perform enhanced daily cleaning between 6 a.m. and 2 p.m. in classroom buildings.

COVID-19 supplies

NMSU provides supplies needed to maintain a healthy environment. All faculty, staff, and students should ensure that their personal workspaces are sanitized, and NMSU will ensure

availability of supplies. Employees and students will be provided masks if needed, or they may use their own.

For assistance with COVID-19 protective supplies purchases or barrier purchases that don't require installation by Facilities and Services, contact the Aggie Service Center at asc@nmsu.edu or call 575-646-2000. For more information, visit the [Aggie Service Center COVID-19 Protective Supplies webpage](#).

Signs and informational posters

In addition to signage installed by Facilities and Services, printable informational posters, checklists, and fliers are available for download at now.nmsu.edu, along with guidelines about where and how they should be posted by building monitors. These include reminders about the NMSU system's COVID-19 Safety Commitment, rules and expectations regarding personal responsibility, checklists for self-monitoring of health and wellness, information about reporting a positive COVID-19 test, and other topics.

Guidelines for campus visitors and events

Much like NMSU students and employees, visitors to each of New Mexico State University's campuses are responsible for following all current public health orders and travel restrictions and for taking all steps needed to minimize the possible transmission of COVID-19.

Any visiting faculty, vendors, contractors, outside community members or other campus visitors who exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should not come to any NMSU campuses. These individuals should stay home and contact their healthcare provider.

Visiting faculty are subject to current [public health orders](#) and [NMDOH travel restrictions](#) that apply to travelers entering New Mexico for business purposes.

Anyone visiting an NMSU campus must review and comply with the updated [Visitor Commitment](#) and follow all signage and instructions posted indoors and outdoors regarding face coverings, social distancing, the use of access doors, and traffic flow directions.

Vendors, lessees, entities occupying NMSU assigned building space

Vendors, lessees, or any entity that occupy assigned space in NMSU facilities systemwide must adhere to the NMSU vaccination and testing protocols. It is the responsibility of the vendor, lessee, or entity to track their employees and report any non-compliance to the director of the NMSU facility.

Contractors and vendors with no assigned building space

General contractors or vendors including, but not limited to, construction contractors, mail/package delivery services and other daily services rendered within NMSU buildings that do not occupy assigned building space will comply with the NMSU [Visitor Commitment](#).

Guidelines for events and gatherings

New Mexico State University has a strong relationship with the communities we serve. Under normal circumstances, NMSU invites alumni, donors, community members and other guests to each of our campuses to take part in events and gatherings. These activities help NMSU bring our educational mission to our community, as outlined in our strategic plan, **NMSU LEADS 2025**, Goal 3: Amplify Extension and Outreach.

Decisions regarding gatherings must be made in the interest of the health and safety of our university community and in accordance with current public health guidance. NMSU will continue to reassess this guidance and update as appropriate.

Student events and gatherings

- ◆ The normal Event Registration Process is in place for student events, and can be completed via the organization **Crimson Connection page**. Further instructions for how to complete that process can also be found on the Crimson Connection homepage, as well as on the **Student Life website**.
- ◆ Requests that require academic space, can be submitted to University Student Records via the **Event Scheduling website** following approval of the Event Registration in Crimson Connection.
- ◆ All student organizations should review the revised and updated **Student Organization COVID-19 Policies**.

Employee, department and NMSU-sponsored events

- ◆ Employee gatherings, outside of normal business, must follow all rules and public health guidance, as outlined by the NMDOH.
- ◆ The event request process begins by submitting the Event Request Form **found on the Department's Crimson Connection page**. Further instructions for how to complete that process can also be found on the Crimson Connection homepage, as well as on the **Student Life website**.
- ◆ Requests requiring a reservation of academic space can be submitted to University Student Records via the **Event Scheduling website** upon approval.

NMSU special events

- ◆ Special events at NMSU will follow all rules as outlined by the CDC, NCAA, Western Athletic Conference and NM Department of Health.
- ◆ Concerts and other performing arts presentations must be scheduled in accordance with rules outlined by the CDC and NM Department of Health.

Community events and gatherings

- ◆ Community members seeking to rent space at NMSU for an event must ensure the event follows all rules and public health guidance, as outlined by the NM Department of Health. For information about renting space at NMSU, please visit **conference.nmsu.edu**.
- ◆ Outdoor spaces at each NMSU campus are available to the general public, unless otherwise indicated by sandwich boards, signs or notices to the community.