



Office of the Chancellor

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To: NMSU System Students and Families

From: Dan Arvizu, NMSU System Chancellor 

Subject: Vaccine and testing protocols begin Sept. 30 for all NMSU system students

Students, you and your families may have already heard that the New Mexico State University system will give all employees at all campuses and offices the choice to provide proof of vaccination or proof of a weekly negative COVID-19 test beginning Sept. 30, 2021.

Our top priority is protecting your health and safety – as well as the health and safety of your instructors and the staff who support your educational goals. For that reason, we are extending this vaccination and testing protocol to students at all campuses who will be attending classes in person or coming to campus for any reason. You have a choice about which protocol to follow – but, to be clear, if you plan to be on campus for any reason, by Sept. 30, you must show proof of vaccination or undergo weekly testing for COVID-19.

The pandemic is not over. The Delta variant is spreading rapidly in New Mexico and it will continue to evolve. In order to provide a safer in-person educational environment, we must follow the scientific evidence and the guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), all of which clearly shows that vaccines are safe and our best defense against severe and life-altering infections of COVID-19. This is the best way to remain open and provide you with the safest on-campus student experience possible.

We will communicate details about how to submit proof of vaccination or negative tests before Sept. 30. You will need to decide what is best for you. If you choose not to become vaccinated, weekly testing will help ensure that you do not unknowingly bring the virus with you to your campus.

As an added layer of protection, we are also requiring that you, as well as all faculty and staff, wear a mask any time you are inside buildings on our campuses, whether you are vaccinated or not.

Our next NMSU system [town hall webinar](#) will be at 3 p.m. on Aug. 10 and will focus on the new vaccination and testing protocols and the return to campus for faculty, staff, and students. I encourage you and your family to tune in for more information. You may submit questions in [advance](#) and watch via [Zoom](#) or [Panopto](#). For more information, contact the Office of the President at 575-646-2127.

COVID-19 vaccines are available at no cost to you in New Mexico and elsewhere. In Las Cruces, [Aggie Health and Wellness Center](#) offers 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. If you act now and get your first vaccine dose during August, you will be eligible for a \$100 incentive from the state of New Mexico. We'll be working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to offer a large-scale vaccination event on our Las Cruces campus in mid-August, so look for more information on that to be available soon.

COVID-19 testing is available at no cost from many providers, including [Aggie Health and Wellness Center](#) and [Doña Ana Community College's East Mesa campus](#). A list of testing sites across the state of New Mexico is available through the [New Mexico Department of Health](#). Free at-home testing is also available to New Mexico residents from Vault Health. You self-administer the test with a virtual testing supervisor through a secure Zoom, and mail the sample back for laboratory processing, all free of charge. More information is available at [learn.vaulthealth.com/nm](#).

We ask for your patience as we develop and communicate details of the logistics for this initiative. As always, we welcome your questions at covid19@nmsu.edu.