
August 18, 2021

TO: Leadership Council

FROM: Devinder Malhotra, Chancellor

RE: Student COVID-19 vaccination guidelines

Thank you for your counsel and feedback over the last several weeks regarding COVID-19 vaccinations.

Minnesota State will not mandate proof of COVID-19 vaccination or require COVID-19 testing for all students. **However, our colleges and universities will require vaccination attestation for specific student groups or populations that are in settings where there is close and frequent contact with others. Students in the groups below who choose not to provide attestation will need to undergo a COVID test at least once a week.**

As I shared, many of the approaches to student vaccination policies that have been showcased nationally are often for residential stand-alone, single-campus institutions. We are a complex system made up of both regional comprehensive universities with a residential component and community and technical colleges who offer both long-term and short-term educational options. An approach for one sector of our system may not be applicable nor effective for a different sector. In addition, many of our campuses do not have the public health infrastructure to deliver and support an all-student vaccine mandate. Given our unique student populations and educational goals, mandating a vaccination may provide unintended barriers to student success.

We continue to strongly encourage all students to get vaccinated. Vaccines are the way we end this pandemic. They are safe and protect those who are medically unable or ineligible to get vaccinated, our families, and our economy. We know that vaccinations are the surest route to minimizing disruptions to our campus operations and activities. The path we take forward now must continue to stress the importance of education around vaccinations, especially in higher risk student activities; reduce barriers and hesitancy associated with the vaccine; and minimize burdens on students in pursuing their academic goals.

We will continue to monitor the evolving pandemic and remain steadfast in ensuring that our colleges and universities protect the health and safety of our students and support them in achieving their educational goals.

Which students will be required to provide vaccination attestation?

- Students who live in a college- or university-owned or managed **residence facilities** must provide vaccination attestation or be subject to weekly testing. Students must be fully

vaccinated to be exempted from weekly testing by the implementation date below.¹ This also applies to students living in residence halls/apartments where the college/university has a partnership agreement with a community or other provider.

- Students participating in **intercollegiate athletics** consistent with NCAA and Minnesota College Athletic Conference announced vaccine and testing protocols.
- Students who are required to as directed by **clinical or internships sites**. These sites may have requirements or mandates that may go beyond the attestation and testing required by Minnesota State for students in other contexts.
- Colleges and universities can identify additional **student extra-curricular group activities** where social distancing is not possible and that have close and frequent contact with other students (e.g., intramural/club sports, theater productions, choral groups, etc.), where attestation or testing may be required.

Are there other circumstances where employees can ask about a student's vaccination status?

There may be limited circumstances where there is a business purpose for employees to ask students about their vaccination status, in addition to those specific situations noted above (e.g. arriving international students where there are different testing/quarantine protocols for vaccinated vs. unvaccinated). In those instances, a student's response is voluntary, and a refusal to respond will result in an assumption that a student is unvaccinated.

Who pays for the weekly testing?

The college/university will provide access to testing and cover any associated costs, unless paid for by an external party such as the clinical or internship site.

When will this begin?

Colleges and universities are encouraged to begin implementing this guidance and protocols as soon as possible but no later than October 4, 2021. Institutions should give affected students ample notice to allow those who have not yet begun their vaccination regimen to begin their first dose.

Campus Vaccination Awareness & Access Requirements

Many colleges and universities have been working on and have launched vaccination campaigns and incentive programs to encourage student vaccination. As a reminder, colleges and universities may use HEERF institutional grant funds (CARES, CRRSA, or ARP) to provide reasonable incentives to current students, faculty, and staff to get vaccinated against COVID-19. In addition, some of the institutional portion of the ARP funding must be used to “implement evidence-based practices to monitor and suppress coronavirus in accordance with public health guidelines.”

Campus leaders should continue to work with students, faculty, and staff to develop and implement ideas to increase awareness and access to COVID-19 vaccines. Minnesota State joined the [White House](#)

¹ According to the CDC, in general, people are considered fully vaccinated against COVID-19: 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose COVID-19 vaccination series approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”) or the World Health Organization (“WHO”); or 2 weeks after a single-dose COVID-19 vaccine approved by the FDA or the WHO. Students who do not meet these requirements are NOT fully vaccinated. MMB policy 1446.

[COVID-19 College Vaccine Challenge](#). They have shared a *Vax to School: The Back to Campus Vaccine Checklist* which we have encouraged campuses to look at for additional suggestions.

All colleges and universities must implement the following components:

1. Education and Awareness

COVID-19 Vaccine Community Conversations

Campuses must offer a forum where the campus community can raise questions about COVID-19 vaccination with a medical professional and/or trusted messenger. Forums provide access to receive accurate, timely information to share. This can be executed either by partnering with MDH or local public health or community provider.

Social Media/Campus Awareness

Colleges and universities should continue to identify communication channels to increase awareness of vaccine information, connection to resources, and related events. Campus examples can be found in Attachment B. The Minnesota State Marketing and Communications division recently shared communication templates and will continue to assist campuses to support and amplify local messaging.

2. Access to Vaccination

Our goal is to provide students direct access to vaccination. All campuses must provide a vaccine clinic on campus in the early weeks of the fall semester and reoccurring as local public health conditions warrant. For some campus locations, this may not be possible because of size and/or resources. In those cases, campuses should work directly with local public health or community resources to provide direct access to vaccination for students. This may include offering transportation to vaccine sites or similar efforts to reduce or eliminate barriers to vaccinations.

The COVID campus contact should submit to the system office the dates vaccine clinics were held, campus, and number vaccinated. Reports should be submitted to Nate Hallanger, Nathan.Hallanger@MinnState.edu.

3. Incentive Campaign

All colleges and universities must provide a vaccination incentive for students. Many institutions have incentive programs in place that range from gift cards to the campus bookstore or food service to college/university apparel or drawings for prizes. If using institutional funds from any of the three coronavirus relief bills (CARES, CRRSA, or ARP), colleges and universities should refer to FAQ #21 on guidelines for using these funds for vaccine incentive programs: <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/07/FAQ-21.pdf>.

As stated in my June 17th memo, please submit an overview of your incentive program to Chief of Staff Jaime Simonsen, Jaime.Simonsen@MinnState.edu. Questions about possible incentives should be directed to Vice Chancellor Bill Maki, William.Maki@MinnState.edu.



VAX TO SCHOOL: The Back to Campus Vaccine Checklist

Colleges and universities all over the country are taking key steps to keep their campuses safe this fall – and that starts with getting their students, faculty, and staff vaccinated from COVID-19. You can increase vaccination rates right now by:

- ❑ **Hosting on-site vaccine clinics** as students return to campus – in places where students are, including:
 - Move-in day to dorms
 - First year and transfer student orientation
 - During on-campus enrollment periods
 - At high-traffic on-campus offices and spaces, like at a financial aid office or in the quad/central area
 - Tailgates and college gamedays (e.g., at a football game)
 - Trainings for student leaders, like Residential Advisors or Orientation Leaders
 - And more!
- ❑ **Sending out all-campus text messages**, emails, and push notifications to your college community
- ❑ **Putting reminder prompts on the vaccine** into enrollment, class registration, or other processes that all of your students interact with as they start the academic year
- ❑ **Asking academic departments to mention the importance of vaccination** in their return to campus messages
- ❑ **Asking athletic departments** – including coaches, athletes, directors, and other sports figures on your campus – to highlight the importance of getting vaccinated both for safe competitive play and for safely attending sporting events
- ❑ **Offering campus incentives** like coffee perks, gym memberships, scholarships, or gameday incentives
- ❑ **Encouraging students and student organizations to sign up for COVID-19 Student Corps, and to organize student events** to get their peers out to get vaccinated, including canvassing, phone banks, text banks, friend banks, tabling, flyering, dormstorming, and more
- ❑ **Using all of your social media platforms** to get the word out to your student community – and encourage your student organizations to use their platforms to do the same

ATTACHMENT B

Campus Examples

Social Media



Appointments are still available for anyone 12+ at the Aug. 5 and 26 COVID-19 vaccination clinics at the @AnokaRamseyCC Coon Rapids Campus with @AnokaCounty Public Health.

Learn more and schedule your appointment: bit.ly/3iyCJR

#RollUpYourSleevesMN



10:52 AM · Aug 3, 2021 · Sprout Social

2 Retweets 1 Like



Students: You'll have plenty of opportunities to get the vaccine and win a prize or two!

TEBOOKS	<p>Get the shot, win prizes - CLC News</p> <p>Students: You'll have plenty of opportunities to get the vaccine, including at New Student Orientati</p> <p>clcmn.edu</p>
PENCILS & PENS	
BACKPACK	
CLASS SCHEDULE	
COVID-19 VACCIN	

1:44 PM · Aug 12, 2021 · Twitter Web App

1 Retweet 2 Likes



#RollUpYourSleeves, Minnesota! @CenturyCollege is hosting a FREE Covid-19 Mobile Vaccination Clinic, Wednesday, August 25, 11 am - 3 pm, West Campus, Parking Lot N.

Free COVID-19 Vaccination Event
August 25, 11am-3pm

Century College West Campus Parking Lot N
More information: <https://bit.ly/WashCtyVaccine>

10:01 AM · Aug 14, 2021 · Hootsuite Inc.

1 Retweet 2 Likes



Hey Beavers! Did you know there is a \$100 reward for Minnesotans who receive their first vaccine dose between July 30 and Aug. 15?

Take advantage of the reward here: bit.ly/3jKoeNC

Need help finding when, where and how to get the vaccine? Visit bit.ly/3iChQIY



12:54 PM · Aug 13, 2021 · Sprout Social

1 Retweet 1 Like



DCTC
@dctc

Vaccines work best when as many people as possible get vaccinated, not just you. Help people overcome their fears and skepticism about the #COVID19 vaccines by sharing your vaccination story on social media. For more information, go to WeCanDoThis.HHS.gov.

#WeCanDoThis



Getting vaxxed is going viral

11:00 AM · Aug 16, 2021 · Sprout Social



Minnesota State Mankato
@MNSUMankato

Free on-campus vaccine clinics for students and staff start tomorrow. Sign up for your appointment today. mankato.mnsu.edu/coronavirus/sa...

11:25 AM · Aug 16, 2021 · Twitter Web App

7 Retweets 2 Quote Tweets 13 Likes



Minnesota West
@MinnesotaWest

Vaccination Clinics coming soon! #MinnesotaWest #learnwithpurpose

ATTENTION BLUEJAYS!

Don't let COVID-19 mess with your school year... **GET VACCINATED!**

FREE COVID-19 Vaccines will be offered:

GRANITE FALLS CAMPUS - AUGUST 24TH - 11:00AM TO 1:00PM
CANBY CAMPUS - AUGUST 25TH - 11:00AM TO 1:00PM

This will be the Moderna Vaccine, a 2 dose vaccine for those 18 years of age and older.

REGISTER IN ADVANCE OR WALK-INS WELCOME!

TO REGISTER:
WWW.COUNTRYSIDEPUBLICHEALTH.ORG/COVID-19-VACCINE-CLINICS
OR BY CALLING 1-800-657-3291

  



MSU Moorhead
@MSUMoorhead

MSUM will host three COVID-19 vaccine clinics in August. Though the vaccine is not required on campus, we strongly encourage you to get vaccinated to protect yourself and others. All are welcome. No appointment is necessary. Details: mnstate.edu/emergency/drag... #DragonsCare

 

GET VACCINATED, Dragons!

The COVID-19 vaccine is not required on campus, but we strongly encourage you to do your part to keep our Dragon family safe and healthy.

3:30 PM · Jul 9, 2021 · CoSchedule

10 Retweets 2 Quote Tweets 21 Likes



Winona State University
@winonastateu

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A big high five to Tyler for being one of our many WSU students who has chosen to get vaccinated! If you want to join him in being awesome, come get your free vaccine on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday on Campus. wsu.mn/vaxtoschool #VaxUpWSU #CountOnMe



4:01 PM · Aug 16, 2021 · Twitter Web App