



Presidential Policy Memorandum No. 317

To: Virginia Tech Faculty, Staff, and Students
From: Timothy D. Sands
Date: August 19, 2021
Subject: *REVISED* COVID Vaccination and Testing Requirements

Virginia Tech remains concerned about the health and wellness of our university community. To accomplish our goal of an in-person fall semester that offers the fullest possible learning experience for students and enables faculty and staff to accomplish our teaching, research, and outreach missions, it is necessary that we continuously monitor the status of the pandemic and adapt our policies and operations to address emerging health safety issues.

Our operating policies, procedures, and practices are informed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), and our own public health experts and COVID modeling team. In accordance with updated public health guidance confirming the importance of vaccination in slowing the spread of highly transmissible COVID variants, the Virginia Tech vaccination mandate will be expanded to include all employees.

The purpose of this Presidential Policy Memorandum is to outline the revised vaccination and testing program for faculty, staff, and students.

1. As communicated on June 8, 2021, COVID-19 vaccinations are required for all students who do not receive an exemption. Students were required to have uploaded their vaccination cards by Aug. 6, 2021. A comprehensive communication plan was executed this summer to ensure that students received the vaccine information – including reminders regarding the consequences for failure to upload vaccination cards.
2. As communicated on Aug. 2, 2021, the university strongly encouraged employees to be vaccinated and to upload their vaccination card. The university also indicated that if warranted, the university would adjust the policy and require employees to be vaccinated.
3. In recent weeks, the Delta variant of COVID-19 has become the dominant form of the virus. We are firm in our commitment to an in-person fall experience, as well as our concern about the health and well-being of the university community. Effective immediately, all university employees (faculty, staff, and wage employees), regardless of the location of their Virginia Tech employment, will be required to be vaccinated.

- a. Employees must upload their vaccination card, indicating they have received the COVID-19 vaccination(s), by Oct. 1, 2021.
 - b. This vaccination requirement is a condition of employment at Virginia Tech. Failure to provide proof of vaccination may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
 - c. Employees who have an approved medical or religious exemption will be required to participate in the surveillance testing program as outlined below.
 - d. Any employee hired after Aug. 30, 2021, will be required to provide proof of vaccination prior to starting employment at Virginia Tech.
4. As communicated on Aug. 2, 2021, any faculty, staff, or student who is not fully vaccinated will be required to participate in a surveillance testing program, which includes mandatory testing at an initial frequency of at least once a week. On Aug. 5, 2021, Governor Northam issued an executive directive that all state employees who are not fully vaccinated will be required to test weekly for COVID-19. Additionally, any member of the faculty, staff, or student body not fully vaccinated will be required to wear a face covering when in university-owned-or-leased facilities.
- a. For faculty and staff, these requirements are a condition of employment. Any employee who has an approved medical or religious exemption and refuses to participate in the mandatory testing program and/or wear a face covering will be subject to applicable employment policies, with sanctions up to and including termination of employment.
 - b. For students, these requirements are a condition to be part of the university community and they will impact the ability to live, learn, and work in any university-owned-or-leased facility. Any student who is unvaccinated and refuses to participate in the mandatory testing program and/or wear a face covering may be excluded from campus or participation in in-person activities until there is a demonstrated, sustained, and continued reduction in transmission of COVID in the community. Such students will be subject to the policies outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.
 - c. Students, faculty, and staff may be required to participate in additional infectious disease prevention measures if warranted.

With the approval of this Presidential Policy Memorandum (PPM), PPM 313 (Sept. 18, 2020), PPM 314 (Sept. 30, 2020), and PPM 316 (Aug. 2, 2021) are no longer in effect and will be retired.

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