



Office of the Chancellor

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DATE: October 27, 2021

TO: All NMSU employees

FROM: Dan E. Arvizu, NMSU System Chancellor

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dan E. Arvizu".

SUBJECT: Federal vaccine mandate applies to all NMSU employees

On Sept. 9, President Biden issued [Executive Order 14042 on Ensuring Adequate COVID Safety Protocols for Federal Contractors](#). That was followed on Sept. 24 by [guidance](#) from the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force outlining the broad applicability and scope of required workplace safety protocols.

New Mexico State University is a public research institution, and is among hundreds of universities in the United States that are considered to be federal contractors. Like many universities, including [Arizona's three state universities](#), [Penn State](#) and a [growing list](#) of others, NMSU has determined that to ensure full compliance with federal requirements and safeguard our community, **all NMSU employees systemwide**, including student employees, contract employees, and employees teleworking, including from another state, must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by Dec. 8 as a condition of continued employment. Employees who do not comply or become approved for an exemption by the deadline will be subject to disciplinary action, including possible termination.

The protocol we announced in August offered a weekly testing option, and while we can no longer offer this alternative to our employees after Dec. 8, we respect and value every employee of the NMSU system. We hope that when you've weighed your options, you'll choose to become vaccinated and continue to be part of our NMSU system workforce. If you'd like more information about the currently available vaccines, the CDC offers an excellent [Myths vs. Facts](#) resource, a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page, and other [evidence-based information](#) to help you understand the benefits of becoming vaccinated.

This change to our vaccine policy applies to all full-time, part-time and temporary employees, undergraduate and graduate student employees, and contract employees. The vaccine requirement applies regardless of whether you work directly on a federal contract and regardless of work location. This change does not apply to students who are not employees of the NMSU system.

If you are not already vaccinated, you must act quickly in order to complete the vaccine series by Nov. 24 and be fully vaccinated by the Dec. 8 deadline. Individuals are considered fully vaccinated after two weeks have elapsed following their second dose of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine, or following their single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine:

- Moderna: First dose **today**; second dose by Nov. 24
- Pfizer: First dose by Nov. 3; second dose by Nov. 24
- Johnson & Johnson: Dose needed by Nov. 24

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To register for a vaccine and make an appointment, visit VaccineNM.org. Same-day appointments are available in many locations. Walk-in vaccine appointments are also available at many pharmacies throughout New Mexico. Once your vaccine series is complete, upload your CDC card or other documentation at VaxTrax.nmsu.edu. For more information about using the VaxTrax system, visit VaxTraxInfo.nmsu.edu.

Medical and religious exemption requests must be submitted to the Office of Institutional Equity at equity@nmsu.edu. Student employees must submit medical exemption requests to Disability Access Services, at das@nmsu.edu, and religious exemption requests to the Office of Institutional Equity at equity@nmsu.edu. Those who are approved for an exemption from the vaccine mandate will be required to submit weekly COVID-19 test results.

For more information about NMSU's pandemic action plan and COVID-19 health and safety protocols, visit now.nmsu.edu.