



COVID-19 Vaccination Policy

Purpose

Cases and hospitalizations of COVID-19 are surging throughout Ohio and across the country due to the highly transmissible Delta variant. With the vast majority of current hospitalizations impacting those who are unvaccinated, the data shows that vaccines dramatically decrease an individual's chances of experiencing significant illness or death from COVID-19. We also know that vaccinated individuals transmit COVID-19 at lower levels than those who are unvaccinated.

In support of ODU's culture of care, and in the interest of protecting all members of our campus and surrounding communities, the Leadership Team has approved a recommendation from the Pandemic Task Force to implement a campus vaccine mandate, with all members of the community showing proof of full vaccination by November 15, 2021.

This policy will comply with all applicable state and local laws and is based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and local health authorities, as applicable.

Scope

The vaccine mandate applies to all members of the campus community including, students, faculty, staff and non-paid staff. This mandate also applies those students and employees who learn and work remotely, as well as employees contracted through Sodexo food service and facilities. Guest and outside service providers are not included in the requirement

Accepted COVID-19 Vaccines

COVID-19 vaccines that qualify under this policy are any vaccines that have received full U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approval, vaccines that have received FDA Emergency Use Authorization, and vaccines that have received full approval or Emergency Use Listing by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Currently, these qualifying vaccines include: Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine, the Moderna and the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.

Documentation of COVID-19 Vaccine

All members of the ODU community are required to show proof of full vaccination by November 15, 2021.

The Office of Human Resources will begin accepting student, faculty and staff proof of vaccination beginning the week of Sept. 20. Please take this time to locate your vaccination card so you are prepared to present it at the appropriate time. Human Resources will schedule events across campus to collect this information.

While we prefer that you show your physical vaccination card, we will also accept a photo of your card. If you are unable to attend one of these events, you will be able to visit the Office of Human Resources, located in Erskine Hall, room 136, to present proof of vaccination. If you work or learn remotely and are unable to visit campus, there will be an option for you to present proof virtually.

Exemption Requests

Individuals in need of an exemption from this policy due to a medical reason, or because of a sincerely held religious belief or personal reason must submit a completed Request for Exemption. Student exemption forms should be submitted to the Office of Student Development in an envelope marked “confidential.” Employee exemption forms should be submitted to the Office of Human Resources in an envelope marked “confidential.”

Medical Exemptions: An individual can request a health-related exemption through submission of appropriate documentation from their treating health care provider. Any health-related exemptions should be based on medical contraindications and precautions for immunization as based on the most recent General Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)/CDC, and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Religious Belief Exemptions: This is an exemption based on an individual’s genuine and sincerely held belief that receiving a vaccination against COVID-19 is contrary to the tenets of their religion. Individuals must submit a request for religious exemption, and as part of the request, the individual must attest to their reason for exemption and explanation. These requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Personal Exemptions: This is an exemption based on an individual’s genuine and sincerely held personal belief against receiving a vaccination against COVID-19. Individuals must submit a request for a sincerely held personal belief exemption and as part of the request, the individual must attest to their reason for exemption and explanation. These requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Exemption Determinations: The university will review each request for a medical, personal or religious exemption and will make a determination in a fair and nondiscriminatory manner on a case-by-case basis. Individuals will be informed of the exemption determination, and may be contacted if questions arise during the review process. Exemptions will be granted where they do not cause ODU undue hardship or pose a direct threat to the health and safety of others. Exemptions are not guaranteed.

An approved medical, personal or religious exemption does not allow an employee to work entirely remote.

Individuals who are fully vaccinated still must follow all University required COVID health and safety protocols including the university’s mask policy.

Compliance

Students who are not able to show proof of full vaccination by November 15, 2021 and who have not had an exemption request approved by the university will be able to complete the fall 2021 semester; however, those students will not be able to attend classes, events or access campus facilities once the spring 2022 semester begins on January 2, 2022.

Employees who are not able to show proof of full vaccination by November 15, 2021 and who have not had an exemption approved by the university will be placed on unpaid leave beginning January 2, 2022, until their employment status is determined by the University.

Please note there may be a grace period following the November 15, 2021, date during which student and employees can show proof of vaccination without being penalized.

Policy Modification

The university will evaluate compliance with this vaccination requirement in light of public health and safety concerns and circumstances. The university reserves the right to alter these requirements and implement additional requirements.