



Office of the President
JOHN J. HURLEY

Dear Canisius Faculty, Staff and Students:

There is widespread concern on the campus about a Covid vaccine mandate. I have heard from faculty, staff, parents and students who have been vaccinated and have significant concerns about being exposed to the Covid virus. When we decided not to impose a vaccine mandate for either employees of the college or students, it was at a time when the Delta variant had not yet developed into the serious infection risk that it is today. Breakthrough cases among vaccinated persons were rare. Our sense was that there were a fairly high percentage of vaccinated employees. Surveys also indicated that we could expect a vaccination rate of 85% or more among students, with the potential to go higher through communication, education, and campus-based clinics.

The situation has changed rather dramatically in the past several weeks. Breakthrough cases are increasing as the Delta variant continues to be a threat. The number of students who report being vaccinated (by uploading proof of vaccination into the health portal) has fallen well short of our anticipated percentage. This has emerged as a significant point of concern for faculty teaching in person in the classroom. To protect the entire campus and ensure that in person learning on the campus can continue, we must change our approach.

Following President Biden's announcement last week, the Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is in the process of developing an Emergency Temporary Standard (ETS) to implement a requirement that all employers with 100 or more employees ensure their workforce is fully vaccinated or require any workers who remain unvaccinated to produce a negative test result on at least a weekly basis before coming to work.

In anticipation of this rule and after consultation with the college's Faculty Senate and the Board of Trustees, I am announcing today that we are issuing a mandatory vaccination policy for the campus. We are still developing the details and deadlines, but the essentials are as follows:

➤ **Faculty and Staff Vaccine Mandate**

All full and part-time faculty and staff of Canisius College must **provide the college with proof that they are fully vaccinated by November 22, 2021 at the latest.** The policy governing the vaccine mandate is available [here](#) and further details will be released in the coming days from the Office of Human Resources.

We intend to utilize a third-party electronic health records provider, Mediat, for the secure upload, maintenance, and reporting of vaccination records for employees. Mediat specializes in health record compliance for colleges and universities and currently supports the college's student health records. **The Mediat system will be open by October 4 and employees will be asked to upload their Covid-19 vaccination information as soon as possible.**

In accord with federal standards, medical and religious exemptions to the vaccine requirement will be considered. Individuals seeking an exemption should complete a request for accommodation form (available in the [MyCanisius Portal](#)) and submit the form to the Office of Human Resources.

Anyone granted a medical or religious exemption must commit to weekly testing and submit their results. Additional details regarding testing are forthcoming. Violations of the Covid-19 Vaccination Policy may result in appropriate disciplinary measures, up to and including dismissal.

As I am sure you know, Covid vaccinations are free and readily available at pharmacies and clinics across the region. Click [here](#) for a list of vaccination sites. Vaccinations will not be available to faculty or staff through Canisius' Student Health Center.

➤ **Student Vaccine Mandate for Spring 2022 Semester**

I want to provide students with ample advance notice that there will be a vaccine mandate for students. **Canisius will require that students be fully vaccinated by the start of the spring 2022 semester, January 18, 2022. Details and deadlines are forthcoming.** As is the case with faculty and staff, exemptions for medical and religious reasons will be considered and the college will provide details for submission of exemption requests.

It is clear this is a vital step for our community if we wish to maintain a rich and fulfilling on-campus experience. I hope that we can all cooperate in achieving this goal. As Pope Francis himself has stated, getting vaccinated is an act of love and a simple but profound way of promoting the common good and caring for each other.

Very truly yours,



John J. Hurley, President
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