



John J. Hurley
President

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Dear Students and Families,

As colleges and universities around the country continue to develop their plans for a return to more normal operations, the issue of whether to require students to receive one of the Covid-19 vaccines as a condition of returning to campus has emerged as a point of conflict.

The effectiveness of the vaccine and the impressive progress states have made in getting people vaccinated have dramatically slowed the spread of Covid-19 and have led the nation's governors to lift nearly all of the Covid-19 restrictions that were put in place. However, despite the undeniable success of the vaccines, there is a percentage of the population that continues to have some hesitation about receiving these vaccines.

In our recent survey of students, we learned that 83% of those who responded are already vaccinated or plan to be vaccinated prior to the start of the fall semester. It appears that as many as 17% of respondents are delaying vaccination or are opposed for various reasons.

In attempting to decide the course Canisius College will take regarding the Covid-19 vaccine, we have considered these concerns as well as strong concerns expressed by many of the students who have already been vaccinated and who want to see a vaccine mandate on the campus. We are particularly concerned about people who are prevented from either getting the vaccine or developing the antibodies after vaccination due to a preexisting medical condition.

Based on all of the foregoing, I am announcing today the following policy:

- Canisius College continues to **strongly recommend that all students be vaccinated** against Covid-19 as the most effective way of controlling an outbreak of Covid-19 on our campus.
- At least for the fall 2021 semester, however, the college will **NOT** require students to be vaccinated as a condition of returning to in-person learning in the classroom or residing in the residence halls.
- The college **WILL** require, however, that students residing in the college residence halls provide either proof of vaccination or the results of a negative PCR Covid-19 test (rapid antigen tests or over the counter self-tests will not be accepted) taken not more than 72 hours before the student's arrival on campus. Students who have registered for fall 2021 should submit their proof of vaccination or test results to [MyCanisiusHealth](#) ([login required](#)).
- Although Canisius is not generally mandating that students be vaccinated, there are certain "close contact" programs or programs that contain a heightened degree of risk that will

require Covid vaccination as a precondition to participation. This list includes but is not limited to the following. Additional guidance about other programs and activities will be forthcoming.

- The college's athletic conference, the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference (MAAC), voted to mandate (with Canisius opposing) that **all student athletes must be vaccinated** as a condition of being allowed to compete. The MAAC will be issuing guidelines for obtaining exemptions in a limited number of cases.
- The **college's Physician Assistant Studies Program also will be mandating the vaccine for students** because of the requirements of so many of the program's clinical rotation sites.
- Other close contact activities include **medical mission trips for pre-med students** and **campus ministry immersion trips**.
- We have not yet made a decision on when we will resume **study abroad programs**, but when resumed, they are likely to have vaccine requirements as well.

Canisius will continue to monitor developments in the pandemic, especially in light of disturbing new data about the spread of the Delta variant of the virus. We will be monitoring FDA action on the Covid-19 vaccines and consider advisories from public health authorities, including CDC guidance, in making any future decisions regarding a vaccine mandate and restrictions that we might impose on campus.

Greater detail about our policies and procedures may be found on the college's Covid-19 information webpage: <https://www.canisius.edu/canisius-fall-2021-campus-plans>.

We continue to deal with a very serious and complicated public health challenge. I ask for your patience and understanding in working with college staff on the implementation of these guidelines. We remain committed to providing an outstanding education at Canisius College in the safest way possible.

With my best wishes from campus,



John J. Hurley