

CAMPUS COMMUNITY

OU extends vaccination deadlines by one week

Update: OU's expanded vaccination mandate now requires that those who have not yet been vaccinated receive their first shot by Friday, September 10, and their second shot for the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines by Friday, October 8.



September 4, 2021

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In light of the fact that COVID-19 infection rates are rising rapidly across the country and that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has granted full approval for the Pfizer vaccine, OU has decided to expand upon its existing vaccination mandate for resident students.

The university is now requiring that all students planning to attend in-person courses and other university activities, as well as all faculty and staff working on campus or at off-site locations, be vaccinated against the COVID-19 virus.

"I am so very proud of how the Oakland University community has weathered the past 18 months of the COVID pandemic. It is a tribute to your individual and our community's collective perseverance, determination and resilience," said OU President Ora Hirsch Pescovitz. "But, unfortunately, the national and international health crisis is not over. This will continue to require more of each of us. To protect yourself, your family and your community, you must get vaccinated and wear your mask."

The university has been tracking the dramatic increase in the number of cases, as well as the more infectious nature of the delta strain of the virus. Alarming, the 7-day average of cases has increased 14% to 133,056. In Michigan, COVID-19 hospitalizations are up 23% since the week of August 9 and deaths are up 41% since late July.

More than 80 percent of OU students come from Oakland and Macomb counties, where there have been 124,000 and 104,000 reported coronavirus cases, respectively. From July 28 to Aug. 18, Michigan's positivity rate increased from 4.74% to 8.74%.

Today, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer reported, "From January to July of 2021, unvaccinated Michiganders accounted for a staggering 98% of COVID cases, 95% of hospitalizations and 96% of deaths."

The American College Health Association and other national public health organizations have strongly recommended that university-wide vaccination rates be as close to 100 percent as possible. In addition, more than 700 higher education institutions nationwide have vaccine mandates, including the University of Michigan, Albion College, Michigan State University, Wayne State University, Kalamazoo College and Grand Valley State University.

OU's expanded vaccination mandate requires that those who have not yet been vaccinated receive their first shot by **Friday, September 10**, and their second shot for the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines by **Friday, October 8**. All campus community members must upload their vaccination status by these deadlines through the [Graham Health Center secure patient portal](#), where their individual information will be kept confidential.

Requests for medical and religious exemptions to the vaccination requirement will be considered. Exempted individuals will be required to have frequent COVID-19 testing.

OU will continue to offer the \$100 incentive for all students, faculty and staff who upload their data to the portal.

The expanded vaccination requirement will not supersede other infection prevention measures already in place, including the continuing requirement that campus community members wear face masks inside all buildings.

Because students must be vaccinated to attend in-person classes, the university is also working to expand the number of online course offerings.

“It is important that you listen and speak to one another respectfully. If you understand how vaccines are saving lives, please explain that to a friend, a colleague or a fellow student,” said President Pescovitz. “The empathy you show others during this challenging period will serve you well in the future, even if it is not reciprocated today.”