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## Chancellor Messages\_Public Health Is Everyone's Responsibility

Dannel P. Malloy

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Matthew Revitt <matthew.revitt@maine.edu>

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## Public Health Is Everyone's Responsibility

1 message

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**Chancellor Dannel Malloy** <chancelloroffice@maine.edu>  
Reply-To: chancelloroffice@maine.edu  
To: matthew.revitt@maine.edu

Fri, Sep 10, 2021 at 1:45 PM



**September 10, 2021**



UMS Community Members:

We returned to our campuses around Maine this fall because we wanted the most normal college experience possible. And yet, COVID's Delta variant has the pandemic surging around us again. We responded as we always have -- we adjusted to the realities of the pandemic and responsibly adopted science-based public health safety measures that allow us to stay together safely to teach and learn, research and work, and yes, socialize, gather on the university mall, attend football games and other sporting events, and so many other things that make the college experience together special.

To do these things safely requires that we take advantage of every public health tool we have. We reinstated indoor masking requirements. We moved up our plans to require safe and effective COVID vaccinations -- including the now fully-FDA approved Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine -- for UMS community members coming to campus except for medically necessary or legally required exceptions. We're testing, isolating, and quarantining as necessary.

More than 21,000 UMSers have verified their vaccination status with our PointNClick portal so far, including nearly 95 percent of our residence hall students and 82 percent of our full-time employees. Those who have sought an exemption or not established their vaccination status will have regular COVID tests, currently weekly, so we can identify and isolate cases of infection within our community. And we'll be reviewing the executive orders President Biden [announced yesterday](#) to be sure that UMS fully complies with both the spirit and letter of all new regulatory requirements necessary to end the pandemic.

Doing all of these things together is what gives us the best chance of staying together safely this fall.

### **Everyone has a Responsibility to Protect Public Health**

Despite our outstanding progress, there is still work to do. Nothing less than full participation with our vaccination and testing requirements will allow us to stay together safely on our campuses. Starting this week, our universities began stepping up compliance communication and outreach to ensure that every student learning or living on campus verifies vaccination status or, if exempted, participates in their testing appointments. We continue our discussions with our faculty and staff to do the same and are grateful to those labor leaders who've already signified their support for these critical requirements.

The consequences of not complying with the COVID requirements in place thus far are clear.

### **Student Consequences for Failing to Register Vaccination or an Exemption**

Students who choose to not become fully vaccinated by October 15 or seek an exemption by that date will no longer be

eligible to live or learn in person on our campuses. By their choice, these learners must be prepared for their education and housing to be disrupted this semester.

The University of Maine System cannot guarantee that a change in instructional delivery will be an option for those who willingly give up their privilege of living and learning in person on campus. And there will be no special refund policies for tuition, room, board or other fees for those few among our in-person population learners who choose not to comply.

The [guidance we have posted for students](#) also clearly states that withdrawal from courses could hamper an individual's ability to complete their degree and federal financial aid eligibility. We want every student to stay with us and to succeed, but I cannot be more clear that choosing not to get vaccinated when you can do so puts both academic progress and our communities' health and safety at risk.

### **Faculty and Staff Vaccine and Testing Requirements**

I have been saying that I want our faculty and staff to meet the same expectations we have for our students. I want every faculty and staff member who can be vaccinated to do so, and I've invited our labor leaders to join me in encouraging full vaccination for everyone who can. I recognize that some employees are unable to be vaccinated, and those who can't will have to be tested regularly to continue work on campus. In our current public health environment in our university living and learning environments, refusing to be either vaccinated or tested regularly is simply not acceptable. Earlier this week, I discussed these expectations with the leaders of our bargaining units, and I hope to finalize our faculty and staff protocols as soon as possible.

If you work on any of our campuses but haven't yet been vaccinated, please do so as soon as possible if you can. Please be a part of making our university community the state's most vaccinated and safest workforce.

It has been remarkable to experience the energy on our university campuses and the enthusiasm for being together as a community so far this fall. We can get through the Delta variant surge, but only if we act responsibly together to protect the public health of our entire university communities.

We've nearly finished two weeks of the semester now. Let's commit to staying safe together.

Regards,



Dannel P. Malloy  
Chancellor

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