COVID-19 health and safety guidance

Plans and resources

Friday Futurecasts and Updates from Campus Leaders

Friday Futurecast — December 10
Published: December 10, 2021

Friday Futurecast — December 3
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Friday Futurecast — November 18
Published: November 19, 2021

Friday Futurecast — November 12
Published: November 12, 2021

Friday Futurecast — November 5
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Maine Memo — Community health and safety update August 4

August 4, 2021 | Friday Futurecasts and Updates from Campus Leaders

Dear University of Maine and University of Maine at Machias students, faculty and staff,

Today, Chancellor Malloy and I, and other university leaders across the University of Maine System announced that students must be vaccinated to participate in any on-campus experiences this fall. As Chancellor Malloy shared in his message earlier this afternoon, discussions with labor leaders are underway to develop a similar policy for university faculty and staff who will be with us on campus starting in late August.

I know that many in our communities are closely following the rapid escalation of the COVID-19 delta variant. The highly contagious nature of this variant and the possibility that younger patients may be more susceptible, leading to increased hospitalizations, are serious concerns. Vaccination reduces the severity of infection. It is a sensible and now a required part of our plans to protect the health of our University of Maine and University of Maine at Machias community members this fall.

To our students: we have been and will continue to do all we can to ensure that you have the information and encouragement you need to safely be a part of our on-campus community this fall. Students have until Aug. 20 to verify their status, receive an exemption or begin the process of becoming fully vaccinated to participate in on-campus learning and activities per the new UMS Student Vaccination Policy.

To be clear, students who do not verify their status or receive an exemption using the secure campus portal will be excluding themselves from in-person learning and other activities at UMaine and UMaine Machias. All students coming to campus under an exemption granted for a documented medical contraindication or sincerely held religious belief, or while working toward fully vaccinated status, will be required to participate in COVID-19 testing and wear face coverings. UMaine and UMaine Machias currently require students, employees and visitors who are not fully vaccinated to use face coverings when in university buildings.

We will continue to follow the science and public health guidance on other safety practices, including face coverings, with the understanding that policies will need to be updated based on events. In my role as chair of the UMS Science Advisory Board, I am fortunate to be able to keep up with the latest information provided by our scientists, and we will soon post a set of Q&As that summarize the best information we have from science concerning the vaccine and the delta variant.

The challenges of the delta variant may feel like a setback, but we are making progress in this pandemic. Vaccination is our best tool right now for overcoming the challenge of the pandemic, and for doing our part to care for one another and our communities.

Thank you to all for the patience, flexibility and resiliency you've demonstrated. I appreciate and do my best to listen to everyone's concerns and perspectives, knowing that the ongoing challenges of the pandemic weigh heavily on so many of you who carry multiple responsibilities with your families and more. Know that we will continue to be responsive and make the best decisions possible for the health and safety of our UMaine and UMaine Machias communities, even though that may mean guidance and plans could change.

I wish you the best for the rest of the summer and look forward to seeing you soon.

Joan Ferrini-Mundy
President