

Academic Dispatch



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UNM Policy on Mask Wearing

Effective August 2, 2021, and with the support of President Stokes, UNM is instituting a revised policy on the wearing of protective face coverings.

UNM continues to watch the evolving public health recommendations and the growing body of scientific knowledge of SARS-CoV-2, in order to decrease the prevalence of COVID in our community while still delivering on our mission of learning and discovery. We pay close attention to CDC guidance in developing UNM's response.

Effective Monday August 2, 2021, UNM will require masks to be worn indoors by all individuals, vaccinated and unvaccinated, at all locations on the UNM Albuquerque, Taos, and Valencia campuses, as well as our regional site in Sandoval County. Masks must be worn in any indoor group setting, including classrooms.

All students, faculty, staff and visitors should wear their masks at all times in UNM buildings unless they are eating, drinking, or in an office alone. Please help us continue good public health practices (handwashing; staying home when ill; physical distancing, when possible; mask wearing, etc.) so we all stay safe and healthy. This policy aligns with the current HSC policy for all individuals to wear masks in indoor settings, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, giving us a consistent policy for all our sites in Albuquerque.

Vaccinated individuals do not need to wear masks outdoors, or in their assigned rooms in our residence halls.

This policy is based on CDC guidance that masks be worn in counties with 7-day average community transmission of more than 7 new cases per 100,000 persons. Because McKinley County and Los Alamos County are currently below these limits, owing to strong vaccination rates, our sites at Gallup and Los Alamos are currently exempted from the indoor masking requirement for those who are vaccinated, although masking is still recommended as a good public health measure and is required for those who are not vaccinated.

This masking policy will be revisited as we continue to watch the relevant data on disease progression, including community transmission, test positivity rates, and rates of spread.

The best way to bring the community transmission down remains to be vaccinated. Please sign up to be fully vaccinated at <https://goodtimes.vaccinenm.org/good-times/>

UNM is still providing incentives to students and some employees to be fully vaccinated. Learn more at <https://bringbackthepack.unm.edu/protecting-the-pack/vax-the-pack.html>.

Based on state DOH data, about 81% of UNM employees (outside the health system) are fully vaccinated, and over 56% of students. Let's get those numbers up!

James Paul Holloway
Provost & Executive Vice
President for Academic Affairs

Doug Ziedonis
Executive Vice President
for Health Sciences

Teresa Costantinidis
Senior Vice President for
Finance and Administration

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