



ELMIRA COLLEGE

Vaccine FAQ's for Students and Families

(As of 1/10/22. This document will be updated as needed.)

Please submit COVID-19 questions to covid19@elmira.edu.

1. Why are vaccinations required?

Unfortunately, the rapid spread of the coronavirus has led to increased cases of COVID-19 and an increased number of people of all ages becoming seriously ill. This led the College to the decision to require vaccinations in order to ensure the health and safety of our campus community for the academic year.

We strongly believe in the benefits of an on-campus, interactive, in-person educational setting. Part of the college experience is in the social bonds you create with people who will become your lifelong friends. Vaccinations are the safest way to achieve this goal as they not only ensure your safety but they help to ensure the safety of others, particularly those who are immunocompromised.

2. Do I have to be fully vaccinated prior to arriving at the College?

Returning students must be fully vaccinated before arriving on campus for the Winter 2022 Term. Boosters are strongly recommended. New students do not need to be fully vaccinated prior to their first arrival at the College, but should plan to complete a vaccination series by February 10. The College is offering two, free vaccine clinics on campus on Thursday, January 13 and Thursday, February 10. Each clinic will feature the two-dose Pfizer vaccine, the two-dose Moderna and single-dose Johnson and Johnson vaccines.

As a reminder, people are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine.

We understand students are in different situations, including:

- **STARTED BUT NOT COMPLETED VACCINATION:** If you have begun a vaccination course at home, you can finish your vaccine course on campus.
- **HAS NOT STARTED OR RECEIVED ANY VACCINE:** If you have not received any vaccine by your arrival on campus, **you are strongly encouraged to register for the January and February on-campus vaccine clinics.** [Registration for the clinics is currently open](#)
 - [January 13 registration](#)
 - [February 10 registration](#)

The clinics will have all three of the FDA-approved vaccine options available. In addition, there is a link to check for other vaccine locations near Elmira in the Coronavirus Resources section on the [MyEC homepage](#).

- **RECENTLY HAD COVID-19:** If you recently had COVID-19 you can - and are still required to - get vaccinated. This can be done as soon as you come out of isolation. As a reminder, if you have had a POSITIVE result on a COVID-19 test, please email the Clarke Health Center at clarkehealth@elmira.edu *right away*.

3. Where/How do I go to get vaccinated?

You can choose where to get vaccinated. As noted above, the College will host two vaccine clinics on campus in January and February. You can also find off-campus COVID-19 Vaccine clinics using the links provided on [MyEC](#) or the CDC's [Vaccine Finder](#).

4. How do I know if the vaccines are safe and effective?

There is a lot of misinformation circling and we understand if you are unsure about the safety and effectiveness of getting the vaccine. However, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has rigorous scientific standards. Ongoing research continues to support the safety and efficacy of the COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use by the FDA. We encourage you to review the information provided by the [FDA](#) as well as additional information available from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC).

For anyone who has specific questions about their health and safety, we recommend you speak directly with your personal medical provider(s).

5. Are there medical or religious exemptions for getting the vaccine? If so, what is the process for getting an exemption?

Yes, medical and religious exemptions will be provided. Students must apply for an exemption using the appropriate form, which are available on [MyEC](#). Exemptions forms will be reviewed by the Clarke Health Center and granted on a case by case basis. The CHC will notify students directly and this information will be kept strictly confidential.

6. What if I refuse to comply with the vaccination requirement?

We want to work with students to ensure they are on a path to getting fully vaccinated and will work with everyone as best we can on a case-by-case basis. However, students who are not eligible for a medical/religious exemption who refuse to become fully vaccinated may need to leave campus, forfeiting a portion of their tuition, housing, and meal plan funds (according to our refund policy).

7. Do I still need to provide any proof of status prior to arrival on campus?

Yes. All students are REQUIRED to receive a PCR test or rapid test administered by a professional testing site (e.g., urgent care, clinic, and pharmacy) within 72 hours PRIOR to your arrival on campus and MUST upload a copy of the test result to the student health portal, <https://elmira.studenthealthportal.com>. Rapid-result antigen home tests do not qualify.

If you have had COVID and:

- You tested positive more than 90 days prior to your return to campus for Term II, you will need to be tested again and upload your test results within 72 hours of your return to campus; OR
- You tested positive within the 90 days leading up to your return to campus for Term II, you do NOT need to test prior to arrival, however you must upload your test results.

NOTE: If you have had symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste/smell) and/or you have had a COVID test administered off-campus, or a POSITIVE test, please email the Clarke Health Center at clarkehealth@elmira.edu **right away**.

8. Which vaccines are accepted?

Acceptable vaccines include those approved for use in the U.S.:

- J&J/Janssen
- Moderna
- Pfizer

For international students, we will also review, on an individual basis, additional vaccines.

9. Are there testing requirements?

Vaccinated and unvaccinated students will be subject to routine, random COVID testing to ensure the safety of everyone.

As of now, NCAA guidelines for student athletes and staff include the following:

- Fully vaccinated** athletes and staff will not need to be tested unless they are showing symptoms or are chosen as part of the College's random testing.
- Unvaccinated athletes and staff must:
 - a) have one PCR/NAAT test within 3-5 days of arrival or 2 antigen tests on non-consecutive days within 3-5 days of arrival, and will not be able to practice until this is completed.
 - b) participate in surveillance testing - weekly testing PCR/NAAT test or 3 times/ week antigen testing.
 - c) test prior to competition - PCR/NAAT test within 3 days of first competition of the week or antigen test within 1 day of each competition (home or away)

** In January 2022, the NCAA changed their definition of fully vaccinated to: a fully vaccinated individual is a person that has 3 shots of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccines or 2 shots of the J & J vaccine.

Note: the College uses antigen testing on campus.

10. Will the College provide a space to quarantine and isolate, if necessary?

Yes, Alumni Hall is designated as quarantine and isolation space, if needed for the 2021-2022 academic year. Per Chemung County Health Department, anyone who needs to quarantine or isolate must remain in place and cannot leave the county in order to prevent the further spread of the virus.

11. Are faculty and staff required to be vaccinated?

Yes. Employees are also required to be fully vaccinated. Boosters are strongly recommended as soon as an individual is eligible.

12. Can I wear a mask outdoors even if I am vaccinated?

Of course. We want everyone to feel safe AND accepted. So, whatever your reasons (because you feel safer or because you don't want others to feel singled out) that is fine by us.

****Note:** As of Monday, September 13, the College implemented a **mandatory indoor mask mandate for all students and employees, regardless of vaccination status as part of it's NYS HERO Act Plan & Policy** (see page 2 of the Elmira College 2021-2022 Coronavirus Guidelines).

- This applies to all indoor situations when physical distance cannot be maintained. Masks do not need to be worn indoors when employees are working alone at their physically distanced desk and when students are in their residence hall room.
- Virtual meetings are encouraged whenever possible.
- At this time, and following [current CDC guidance](#), wearing a mask outdoors is optional for everyone, but strongly encouraged when in crowded outdoor settings and for activities where you may have close contact with others who are not fully vaccinated.