



ELMIRA COLLEGE

## Vaccine FAQ's for Students and Families

*(As of 9/10/21. This document will be updated as needed.)*

Please submit COVID-19 questions to [covid19@elmira.edu](mailto:covid19@elmira.edu).

### 1. Why are vaccinations becoming required?

Unfortunately, the rapid spread of the Delta variant 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 now in order to ensure the health and safety of our campus community for the upcoming 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?

No, students do not need to be fully vaccinated prior to their first arrival at the College. 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. Anyone not fully vaccinated will need to wear a mask indoors and outdoors and remain physically distanced until they are fully vaccinated.

While students do not need to be fully vaccinated prior to arrival, they will need to get fully vaccinated by Friday, October 8, prior to leaving for the fall break. We will work with students to get registered for the Sept. 1 COVID-19 vaccination clinic as part of the Move-In process. See clinic details in question #4.

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. Remember, anyone not fully vaccinated is required to wear a mask **indoors and outdoors**.
  - For those taking the Johnson and Johnson's Janssen vaccine that means wearing a mask until two weeks after the date of the shot.
  - For those taking a Pfizer vaccine that means taking a second dose three weeks after the first shot and then waiting two additional weeks before going without a mask
  - For those taking a Moderna vaccine that means taking a second dose four weeks after the first shot and then waiting two additional weeks before going without a mask.
- **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 September on-**

**campus vaccine clinics.** [Registration for the clinics is currently open.](#) 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](mailto:clarkehealth@elmira.edu) *right away*.

### 3. **How long do I have to get fully vaccinated?**

The timeline for becoming fully vaccinated will depend on several factors. With some exceptions, including medical and religious exemptions – students should be fully vaccinated by Friday, October 8, prior to leaving for the fall break.

### 4. **Where/How do I go to get vaccinated?**

The College has partnered with Arnot Ogden Medical Center to provide on-campus vaccination clinics. There are currently two scheduled: Wednesday, Sept. 1 and Wednesday, Sept. 22. We will work with Arnot to schedule additional clinics if needed. Please watch for announcements about any future clinic dates.

You can also find off-campus COVID-19 Vaccine clinics using the links provided on [MyEC](#) or the CDC's [Vaccine Finder](#).

### 5. **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).

### 6. **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.

### 7. **What if I refuse to comply with the vaccination requirement?**

We want to work with students as they arrive 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 by Friday, October 8, will need to leave campus and will forfeit a portion of their tuition, housing, and meal plan funds (according to our refund policy), as classes will be offered in-person this fall.

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

Yes. On August 3, students received an email from Wendy Fiscus, director of health services, instructing students to use the [Student Health Portal](#) (NOTE this site may not work with the IE browser) to provide either of the below items **PRIOR** to the start of Fall Term. This is still required.

- Proof of vaccination (if you haven't already, upload a copy of your vaccination card to the [Student Health Portal](#))

### **OR**

- Upload a NEGATIVE result to the Student Health Portal on a COVID-19 Test performed within 5 days of arrival on campus

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](mailto:clarkehealth@elmira.edu) **right away**.

## 9. Which vaccines will be 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.

## 10. Are there testing requirements?

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

*As a reminder, all students who are not fully vaccinated will need to show proof of a negative test prior to arriving on campus.*

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)

Note: the College uses antigen testing on campus.

**11. 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.

**12. Are faculty and staff required to be vaccinated?**

Yes. Employees are also required to be fully vaccinated by the start of fall break on Friday, October 8.

**13. 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.