



Western Colorado University Policy for Mandatory Employee Vaccination for COVID-19

Purpose

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, to protect the health and welfare of our students, faculty, staff, and communities, and in accordance with Western Colorado University's duty to provide and maintain a healthy workplace, we are adopting this employee vaccination policy. Vaccines are important for stopping the spread of COVID-19 and for returning to normal in-person campus operations. Western's policy will comply with all applicable laws and will follow guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and local health authorities, as applicable.

Scope

All employees are required to be fully vaccinated for COVID-19, unless an exemption is requested and approved. This includes all classifications; full-time, part-time, and temporary employees.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for the use of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine, Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine, and Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine for immunization to prevent COVID-19. These vaccines are currently available and the subject of this policy.

Procedures

1) **Deadline:** The deadline for compliance with the employee vaccination policy is August 16, 2021.

2) Compliance Procedures

There are two ways employees may comply with the policy. Before the deadline has expired, employees will be required to either

a) Provide Proof of Vaccination

Employees may be fully vaccinated at a vaccination clinic, at a retail pharmacy, or by a healthcare provider of their choice and receive any of the vaccines currently available.

Documentation procedure

- i) Gunnison County Public Health provided Western with confidential verification of employee vaccinations as of May 25, 2021. No action is needed by employees, unless notified by HR.
- ii) If an active or new employee vaccination is not on the vaccine verification list, the employee is required to provide a copy of their vaccination record to the Human Resources staff no later than August 16, 2021. (HR will provide you a notice if you are not on the list.)
 - (1) Employees may deliver a copy of their vaccination record to the HR office, Taylor Hall 321, in person, via intra-campus mail, or by traditional mail service.
- iii) As a personal health record, the HR office maintains all vaccination records in a confidential file, separate from the personnel file.

b) Receive a Vaccine Exemption

Employees may request a vaccination exemption for medical, religious, or personal reasons. This policy adopts the terms and definitions used by the State of Colorado for other vaccinations.

- i) Employee vaccination exemption request forms are available on the HR Collaborate COVID-19 Resources page, or by contacting any member of the HR staff.
- ii) Timing of Exemption Requests. Employees seeking an exemption are encouraged to submit their requests to the Director of Human Resources by July 5, 2021. This allows adequate time for processing the request, determining whether any additional accommodations are necessary, and/or time for the employee to comply with the full vaccination requirement if circumstances require. New employees hired after July 5, 2021 are encouraged to submit any applicable request for exemption at time of hire.
- iii) Employee vaccination exemption request forms may be delivered to the HR office, Taylor Hall 321, in person, via intra-campus mail, or by traditional mail services.
- iv) If granted an exemption, unvaccinated employees may be required* to:
 - (1) Participate in regular COVID-19 testing;**
 - (2) Monitor Western email daily for important health notifications;
 - (3) Isolate for 10 days if tested positive for COVID-19; AND
 - (4) Quarantine for 14 days if the employee is determined to be a close contact of a positive case by Western, the Gunnison County Public Health Department, or another state or local public health authority.

*These requirements are subject to change based upon available and emerging epidemiological evidence and the overall burden of disease related to COVID-19 transmission on our campus and in our region. Employee compliance with these requirements is subject to verification.

**The specific process for weekly testing and cost to the employee will depend on available testing options at the time.

3) Failure to Comply

Employees who have not confirmed they have received at least one vaccination dose or been granted an exemption prior to Monday, August 16, 2021 will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination in accordance with existing disciplinary processes for the applicable employee classification.

4) Appeals

Employee exemption appeals are considered on a case-by-case basis utilizing an interactive process with the employee.

Please direct any questions regarding this policy to the office of Human Resources.