

Suffolk County Community College

College Brief

NO. 183 August 20, 2021

TO: The College Community

FROM: Angelica Rivera
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SUBJECT: Timely COVID-19-Related Reminders

The following information is being shared with faculty and staff in order to remind everyone of the institutional pandemic requirements that are currently in place.

- 1. COVID-19 Vaccination:** We continue to strongly encourage faculty, staff and students to complete the vaccination process as soon as possible. At this time:
 - Anyone aged 12 and older is eligible to receive the vaccine in New York State.
 - The Pfizer vaccine is authorized for use in individuals aged 12 and older.
 - The Moderna and one-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccines are authorized for use in individuals aged 18 and older.

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](https://www.cdc.gov/), the COVID-19 vaccines are safe, effective and critical to helping us get back to normal. If you plan to become vaccinated, but do not yet have an appointment, you can find locations with availability near you by accessing the link provided below—simply type in your zip code and the search will show you nearby pharmacies and other vaccine locations that have vaccine availability and that are located within a short radius from where you are: <https://www.suny.edu/knowyourvax/>

- 2. Less frequent pooled saliva testing for those who provide documentation that they are fully-vaccinated:**
Fully-vaccinated employees should scan and provide a copy of their vaccination card to Human Resources at this address AVPHR@sunysuffolk.edu, if they have not already done so. Employees can also call Human Resources at (631)-451-4207 to schedule an appointment to bring a copy of their card to the office. All vaccination cards will only be handled by staff within the Office of Human Resources and copies will remain confidential.

As of September 1, 2021, the College will no longer require COVID-19 testing for those employees who have submitted proper documentation of their full COVID-19 vaccination status.

Non-vaccinated employees, as well as those employees who have not yet submitted documentation of their full vaccination status, will continue to be required to participate in weekly COVID-19 testing as stated in the SUNY Fall Guidelines dated July 8, 2021.

Today's issue of *Newsday* reported that the current percentage of individuals in Suffolk County who are fully-vaccinated is 58.8%. Throughout the summer, our AME and exempt staff members have been submitting proof of vaccination to the Office of Human Resources. Many Faculty and Guild members have been away for the summer months. Since we want to ensure safe spaces collegewide as we commence with the fall semester, we are taking this opportunity to urge everyone who has not yet provided evidence of vaccination to do so as soon as possible.

3. **Required use of face coverings/masks on campus:** To eliminate the need to have faculty or staff monitor individuals' vaccination status and to maximize opportunities for students who wish to return to on-campus learning, the College will continue to require the use of face coverings/masks this fall, as outlined below:
 - For everyone, regardless of vaccination status, face coverings/masks are required in all public areas of all college buildings, including classrooms, labs, offices, common spaces, and facilities, as well as in crowded outdoor settings and venues and when interacting with College Public Safety Officers.
 - In addition, individuals who **are not fully vaccinated** or who do not submit proof of vaccination to the college, must also continue to use a face covering/mask while on campus any time there is a potential to be in a crowded setting, *whether indoors or outdoors*.
 - Individuals who **are fully vaccinated** against COVID-19 (i.e., those who are two weeks past their final dose of an authorized vaccine) are no longer required to wear a face covering/mask outdoors on campus while alone or in small outdoor groups and gatherings.
 - Limited exceptions to these rules are as follows:
 - While actively eating or drinking with appropriate physical distancing. Students are encouraged to take advantage of additional outdoor furniture that has been provided on our campuses to further enhance the dining experience.
 - When by themselves alone.
 - Individuals who are unable to wear a face covering/mask due to a medical or health condition may request an exemption from this requirement and can confidentially address their individual circumstances.

4. Please note that students enrolling in hybrid or on-campus classes have been advised that they should be prepared to show evidence of vaccination, and that they must wear a mask in order to remain in the classroom or lab. Faculty and staff are encouraged to review the attached flyer for information currently being distributed to all students. Reminder signage will be displayed across the campuses this fall. Masks will be made available at Public Safety booths, at campus student center information desks, and in instructional buildings. Everyone is encouraged to maintain appropriate physical distancing whenever possible.

All employees should continue to monitor themselves for possible symptoms of COVID-19. Symptomatic employees should not report to work and should notify their supervisor and the Office of Human Resources immediately.

As always, the content of this College Brief is subject to change if/when new guidelines are issued or clarified by the CDC, NYS, and/or SUNY.

Keeping You Safe and Healthy



Important Things to Know While Choosing Your Schedule

A big part of achieving your academic goals means staying healthy throughout the semester. That's why we are sharing the following expectations about safeguarding students on campus this fall:

Mask Up!

Wearing a mask helps protect everyone. That's why all students, regardless of COVID-19 vaccination status, will be required to wear a mask in class, inside any College buildings, and in any crowded outdoor settings.

COVID-19 Weekly Testing

Staying healthy begins by knowing that you are not infected by the virus. That's why all students who attend on-campus classes or activities – but have not submitted proof of vaccination against COVID-19 – will be required to participate in weekly on-campus COVID testing.

FDA Full Approval of the Vaccine Will Make Student Vaccinations Mandatory

The FDA is expected to grant full approval to the COVID-19 vaccine in the very near future. Once that happens, all students taking in-person classes will be given a time frame in which to comply and secure at least their first shot and/or to provide proof of vaccination to the College. Students may be able to submit medical and religious exemption applications. Please note, some programs and activities (such as clinical rotations at external sites) may have additional requirements which do not allow exemptions.

Please Choose an Online Schedule If You Choose Not To Be Vaccinated

We are pleased to offer many courses completely online. Students who do not plan to be vaccinated are encouraged to build a schedule using one of our three online options. Students who do not follow the vaccine mandate will not be able to continue in-person learning on campus and will be subject to existing College policies related to withdrawals and refunds.

We Believe That You Belong at SUNY Suffolk!

By working together, we can make this upcoming semester successful for everybody. If you have any questions, please see one of our counselors or advisors before completing your schedule.



Please be aware that all plans remain subject to change, based on future decisions made by the College, SUNY, and our elected officials. Students are encouraged to refer to the college's coronavirus website for detailed information at sunysuffolk.edu/coronavirus.