



FIVE TOWNS COLLEGE

FTC Reinstates Mandatory Vaccination Policy

August 24, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

Last week the College announced revised masking and vaccination policies for the new academic term. These were adopted in response to the rapidly changing public health emergency. Indeed, previously the College modified its vaccination policy, noting that it would not mandate vaccination unless there was full FDA approval. Since our email to you last week, just yesterday the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) granted full approval to the Pfizer Covid-19 Vaccination.

In view of this important development, I write to advise you that the College is immediately returning to a mandatory vaccination policy. Please take notice that all students must provide proof that they have received at least the first dose of either the Pfizer or Moderna Vaccine by Thursday, September 30, 2021. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is also acceptable. Individuals who are not in compliance with this mandatory policy by that date will not be permitted on campus thereafter. This policy is similar to the policy adopted by SUNY, CUNY and nearly every other college and university in New York State.

As previously noted, medical and religious waivers will be granted in some cases. However, in both cases the request for a waiver must be supported by the student's medical history. Requests for waivers based on newly discovered religious convictions are not likely to be approved – particularly when not supported by a recognized religious order. Similarly, requests for medical waivers not supported by a licensed physician documenting a known medical history or condition will not be accepted.

If you are unvaccinated and are still unwilling to become vaccinated even with full FDA approval of the vaccination, the College strongly urges you consider withdrawing or applying for a Leave of Absence now. Should you begin classes on September 1, you do so with the understanding that the College will not issue any tuition adjustments or refunds as result of a refusal or unwillingness to comply with the mandatory vaccination policy by September 30. Your decision to start classes constitutes acceptance of this condition.

For those students who are unvaccinated now, but planning to become vaccinated during the grace period, you are still required to provide proof a negative Covid-19 Test taken no earlier than 7 days prior to the start of classes on September 1. For your convenience, the College will conduct Covid-19 testing on campus the first day of class, September 1 in the Downbeat Café. Unvaccinated students who participate in that test will be deemed to have complied with this testing requirement. If you would like to get tested on September 1, please register for an appointment using the FTC App. Testing is not limited to unvaccinated students: any member of the College community who would like to be tested may register for an appointment on that day. Tests will be conducted by Northwell Health. You must bring your medical insurance card with you to be tested, although there is no co-pay fee required. Of course you are welcome to get tested at the medical facility of your choice.



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If you get tested or vaccinated outside the College, please remember to send your documentation to healthrecords@ftc.edu.

I am pleased to share that of the faculty and staff, nearly 90% of those working fully or partially on-ground have submitted proof of full vaccination. Of those students planning to reside on-campus, more than 80% have submitted proof – with 100% compliance expected by move-in day. Of the entire student body, more than 50% have already submitted proof. When considered as a whole, more than 60% of the entire College community has now submitted proof of full-vaccination. We are confident that by October 1, nearly 100% of the Five Towns College community will be fully vaccinated, making our campus one of the safest in America.

I know that this policy change will not sit well with everyone. We have listened. We have heard. We have weighed the pros and cons. We have debated, and we have thought long and hard about our responsibilities as educators for the public health of our community. We prayed for guidance, and trust that we are making the right choice. Now it is up to you to do your part.

Sincerely,

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