

Why is NMC requiring COVID-19 vaccinations for students?

The decision to require Covid-19 vaccinations for students follows an August 12, 2021, joint announcement from all major health systems in the Omaha and Lincoln metro areas that they are moving forward with the requirement that healthcare staff, students and faculty be fully vaccinated against Covid-19 in order to take part in clinical/fieldwork at any of their facilities. In addition, CMS regulations are requiring Covid-19 vaccination for health system employees and clinical students. Nebraska Methodist College students are part of the healthcare community and required to be fully vaccinated. We are here to help you with this process.

What are my next steps?

- Visit the [COVID 19 Resource website](#) for vaccination information as soon as possible.
- Upload proof of vaccination in your program compliance tracker, CastleBranch or Typhon.
- Complete the vaccination process by the communicated deadline.
- Reach out to Campus Health, your Program Director, academic advisor or Dean of Students with questions.
- Students who have already submitted proof of vaccination do not need to do anything further.

What does it mean to be fully vaccinated?

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

Booster shots are highly encouraged.

We highly encourage all students, faculty, and staff (especially those who are high risk) to get a COVID-19 vaccination booster shot. You can visit www.vaccines.gov, or locally, [Douglas County Health Department](#) Community Vaccine Clinics to locate and schedule a COVID-19 vaccination booster shot. Booster shots are free.

How do I let NMC know that I have been vaccinated?

Students that have with either a CastleBranch or Typhon account to track immunization compliance are required to submit proof of vaccination or a completed exemption. Please follow your login instructions and upload your documentation.

Students in programs that do not require a CastleBranch or Typhon account are exempt from the Covid-19 vaccination requirement at this time, but may need to provide proof of vaccination if coming to campus in the future.

Contact Campus Health @ (402) 354-7211 with questions regarding your CastleBranch account. Doctor of Nursing Practice students contact your Program Director with questions regarding your Typhon account.

How do I report symptoms, positive test or exposure?

Students who experience [symptoms](#), test positive or are exposed to Covid-19 are to complete the [Covid-19 Reporting Form](#) or contact Campus Health at (402)354-7211 or (402)-354-7260. If after hours, please leave a message. If you have an emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest urgent care center or emergency room for treatment.

Does NMC keep track of reported positive Covid-19 cases on campus?

NMC updates the COVID-19 dashboard on our [Covid-19 Resource website](#) every Friday.

How do I file for an exemption from the vaccination requirement?

You do have a choice to not be vaccinated. Unfortunately, clinic sites do not have to accept students who are not vaccinated even with exemptions. We are here to help you with this process.

Students have the option to seek an exemption from the Covid-19 vaccination requirement due to medical or religious reasons. Exemption forms are available from Campus Health.

Students should meet with their academic advisor, program director, academic dean, or Dean of Students to discuss how their vaccination status may affect their ability to attend clinical/fieldwork and graduate. Medical requests will need the signature of a medical professional attesting to the reason for exemption.

Please be very aware that although you have completed and uploaded an exemption form, NMC cannot guarantee clinical or fieldwork placement. Clinical site-specific immunization policies may still exclude you from participation in clinical activities; thus, prohibiting progression in your program. NMC is required to follow clinical site-specific policies and cannot prepare simultaneous or virtual alternate clinical plans for students that are unable to attend clinical/fieldwork due to vaccination status.

What vaccines are acceptable to meet the requirement?

Acceptable vaccines for coronavirus include those approved for emergency use by the FDA (Moderna, Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson). For students who have only received the first of a two-part vaccine (Pfizer and Moderna), the second dose must be received by or before being considered fully vaccinated and compliant.

Where can I get my vaccination and booster shots?

Vaccine distribution is managed by federal and state agencies. Go to [vaccines.gov](#), or if locally, [Douglas County Health Department](#) Community Vaccine Clinics, to find vaccines, register, and receive your vaccine. Vaccines and booster shots are free.

What policies will apply differently to boosted vaccinated students versus non-boosted vaccinated and unvaccinated students?

It is highly encouraged to get your booster if you completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine over 6 months ago or primary Johnson and Johnson over 2 months ago. If a **boosted vaccinated** student is exposed to a positive case of COVID-19 and remains asymptomatic, they will not have to quarantine.

A student that has completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine **over 6 months ago** or primary Johnson and Johnson **over 2 months ago** and **are not boosted** will have to quarantine regardless of whether they demonstrate symptoms. .

If an **unvaccinated** student is exposed to a positive case of COVID-19, they will have to quarantine regardless of whether they demonstrate symptoms.

Students who miss class, lab or clinical for quarantine and isolation will need to work individually with their faculty and clinical instructors to determine how to keep up with coursework and clinical/fieldwork competencies.

Will NMC offer COVID-19 vaccination clinics on campus?

More information to come. Please refer back to [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov), or if locally, [Douglas County Health Department](#) Community Vaccine Clinics, to find vaccines, register, and receive your vaccine. Vaccines are free.

Will facemasks be required on campus? (upd. March 10, 2022)

While masks are no longer required, we do encourage that masks continue to be worn indoors, especially if social distancing cannot be maintained. The pandemic continues to be a fluid situation and we will update policies as appropriate for the safety and health of our campus community.

Please note, faculty or staff may require students to wear a mask in the classrooms or in personal office space. Labs will continue to follow health and safety requirements as required by faculty and/or in the syllabi. Methodist Health System and other clinical and fieldwork sites may also require you to wear mask and social distance. Please refer and adhere to the site-specific policies. Masks are required in the Campus Health clinic.

Where can I learn more about COVID-19 vaccines?

To learn more about the COVID-19 vaccines available, visit [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/your-vaccination](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/your-vaccination). At this webpage, you will be able to learn about why the currently available vaccines are safe and effective, how to get a vaccination, what vaccines have been approved for emergency use by the FDA, and how you can prepare for your vaccination.

Who can I contact at NMC for more information?

We understand that you may have questions about the process to submit your vaccine documents or the exemption process. If you don't find your questions addressed in this document, you can contact the following folks for help:

- CastleBranch, how to upload required documents, exemptions, or specific medical circumstances: NMC Campus Health – 402.354.7211 or campushealth@methodistcollege.edu.

- Academic program requirements and academic progression: Academic Advising or your Program Director
 - Neil Volker at Neil.Volker@methodistcollege.edu
 - Katie Meints at Kathleen.Meints@methodistcollege.edu
 - Jane McClure at Jane.McClure@methodistcollege.edu
 - Brooke Clements at brooke.clements@methodistcollege.edu
 - Lisa Johnson at Lisa.Johnson2@methodistcollege.edu
- Questions not covered in the above categories – Contact Sarah Murphy, Chief Student Officer/Dean of Students at Sarah.Murphy@methodistcollege.edu or schedule a meeting via her [Calendly link](#).
- You may also submit questions via the NMC [Compliments, Comments and Concerns](#) reporting link.

Additional Student Resources available include:

- Student Assistance Program (SAP)—Free, confidential counseling services are available for NMC on-ground and online students and their spouses and dependents. 24/7/365 days of the year (nights and weekends, too). Call (402) 354-8020 or (800) 776-6233 to connect with a counselor. More information is available at: www.BestCareEAP.org Member ID: bcNMCSAPe Password: NMCSAP Email: EAP@BestCareEAP.org
- Campus Counseling—Contact Kathy Dworak at Kathy.Dworak@methodistcollege.edu
- Academic Success, ADA accommodations—Contact Lisa Flairty at Lisa.Flairty@methodistcollege.edu or Stacey Nelson at Stacey.Nelson@methodistcollege.edu
- TRIO SSS—Contact Lisa Johnson at Lisa.Johnson2@methodistcollege.edu
- Spiritual Resources—Contact Kim Haizlip at Kimberly.Haizlip@methodistcollege.edu
- Student Engagement—Contact Jenny Christian at Jennifer.Christian@methodistcollege.edu
- Campus Housing—Contact your RAs or Jennifer Harm at Jennifer.Harm@methodistcollege.edu
- Financial Aid Office—If you are experiencing financial hardship, the Financial Aid team is here to help. [Click here](#) to contact a Financial Aid counselor.

When do I need to get my first dose of the vaccination in order to meet the compliance date?

It is advised to begin your vaccination sequence as soon as possible, but no later than six weeks prior to the compliance date.

If I've already submitted an exemption form at my work, do I need to submit a medical or religious exemption with NMC?

Yes. The processes for employee's compliance with their employer and compliance with clinical placements as a student are different. Generally, clinical placement compliance requirements are stricter and reviewed by the clinical sites with higher scrutiny.

What if I don't meet the compliance deadline?

Students who have not submitted proof of vaccination or a completed medical or religious exemption will not be able to enroll for future NMC courses, may be dropped from all current courses and clinical/fieldwork and placed on an immediate leave of absence. Registration holds will be placed on non-compliant student accounts. No exceptions will be made to the student withdrawal or refund policy based on vaccination status.

What if I don't want to get the COVID-19 vaccine?

NMC has a process for requesting medical or religious exemptions. Please be aware that clinical/fieldwork sites have their own policies that vary, and NMC is required to follow those site-specific policies. NMC cannot prepare simultaneous or virtual alternate clinical plans for students that are unable to attend clinical/fieldwork due to vaccination status.

Is my vaccination status HIPAA protected?

The HIPAA privacy rule is not implicated in our process of asking students to upload proof of COVID-19 vaccination or an exemption. There are other laws that protect student information, as well as information collected from students in response to a medical inquiry. NMC will follow best practices and comply with applicable laws in maintaining privacy and security with respect to student vaccination status.

Are vaccinations required for faculty and staff?

Yes, Methodist Health System requires COVID-19 vaccinations for NMC faculty and staff. This includes adjunct faculty members, part-time employees, and full-time contract workers.

Are visitors to campus, such as family members, required to provide documentation of a COVID-19 vaccination?

No. The COVID-19 vaccination requirement only applies to students, faculty, staff, and certain contract workers. Visitors are required to follow NMC's health and safety policies, including masking protocols.