

Ponce Health Sciences University

Covid-19 Student Vaccination and Mandatory Testing-Temporary Policy



PHSU

PONCE HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY

Tamdiu Discendum Est. Quamdiu Vivas

Policy Number:
PHSU-TP-FL21-071221

Date Issued:
July 23, 2021

Next Review Date:
November 2021

Applies to:
All active Students and visiting/international students with assigned in-person academic activities and or clinical/ practicum rotations during the Covid-19 Pandemic Emergency Period
Semester/Quarter/Trimester

Owner:
Vice President of Student Affairs
Academic Affairs
Student Health Services Office

Primary Contact:
Student Affairs

Related Policies: Covid-19 Travel Policy, Covid-19 Temporary Policies, Covid-19 Mandatory Student Testing Temporary Policy

Supporting Forms: Authorization for In-Person Academic Activities, Notification of Inconclusive Result, Notification of Institutional Quarantine, Immunization Exception Form



TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Covid-19 Mandatory Student Testing- Temporary Policy..... 4
- Introduction: 4
- I Legal basis: 4
- II Scope:..... 4
- III Justification: 4
- IV Policy:..... 5
 - Vaccinated Students 5
 - Exemption for Vaccination..... 6
 - Recent Travelers 6
 - In Campus Safety Measures..... 6
 - Self-Report and Notification of Exposure 7
- V Amendments: 7
- VI Repeal and Validity: 7
- VII Approval:..... 7

Covid-19 Mandatory Student Testing- Temporary Policy

Introduction:

Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU) recognizes the urgency for preventive measures to ensure the health and safety of PHSU Community. Therefore, PHSU established a Task Force to provide guidance related to Covid-19 prevention and best practices. In the initial stages of the pandemic, recommendations from the Task Force included mandatory testing for employees and students before returning to campus activities (refer to [Mandatory Testing Policy](#)).

Currently, the Covid-19 vaccine is widely available for people 12 years or older. In Fall 2021, PHSU will return to on-campus (presential) academic activities, returning to an adjusted pre-Covid format. Therefore, the Task Force revisited the requirements and prevention measures for a safe reintegration.

For this purpose, the Student Affairs division, through the Student Health Services Office, will provide clear instructions and directions for the students' reintegration to campus, gathering the required documentation and providing the required certifications to the academic, safety, and security departments.

I Legal basis:

This provision is established for faithful compliance with the Puerto Rico Department of Health Administrative Order 2021-509, the laws and regulations of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico , the Immunization Law for Students Num. 25 of 25th September, 1983, regulations and recommendations of the CDC (Centers of Disease Control), Health Organizations, and the PHSU Task Force for Covid-19.

This policy is approved by the Institutional Administrative Committee and is effective as of July 23, 2021. PHSU reserves the right to modify this Policy and notify students of these changes in a timely manner individually via each student's email as well as on PHSU's website.

II Scope:

This policy applies to all Active PHSU students and/or PHSU visiting or international students who are assigned to in-person academic activities on Main campus, East Campus, and San Juan University Center. It also applies to students assigned to rotations/practicums in Allied Clinical Sites with Covid-19 testing requirements.

III Justification:

The Institution recognizes the importance of providing a safe environment on campus amidst the Covid-19 Pandemic the country is experimenting. Also, PHSU recognizes there are certain flexibilities and recommendations provided by the CDC, governmental agencies, or other health organizations. However, the Institution and the Task Force recognize the importance of maintaining preventive measures for a safe reintegration to campus.

The Institutional Administrative Committee accepted the recommendations to safeguard the PHSU Community's health and safety, as well as the health of the communities we serve.

IV Policy:

For such purposes, all PHSU students with in-campus academic activities and/or clinical/practicum rotation during the Fall Semester 21-22 are required to present evidence of the Covid-19 vaccine. If a student has not been able to receive the vaccine, the Student Health Coordinator will be available to coordinate an appointment for vaccination.

Only students who comply with the Covid-19 vaccination will be allowed to return to campus and proceed with academic activities. The requirement of vaccination applies to any other activities on campus, including, but not limited to, the use of the Library. Non-Vaccinated students will not be allowed on campus.

The Student Health Service Coordinator will gather the vaccination information for all students in Puerto Rico campuses and will emit certifications to the academic departments with the names of the authorized and non-authorized students.

The Academic Departments will ensure only authorized students are attending their academic activities in person.

To facilitate vaccination, Student Affairs has coordinated, in collaboration with the Wellness Center, a system to provide appointments for vaccination. If the student decides to use the PHSU resources, the SHSC will send the student the appointment for vaccination.

Vaccinated Students

PHSU will consider a student vaccinated once all the recommended doses of the vaccine have been administered at least 14 days prior to the in-campus academic activity.

A PCR test will not be required for vaccinated students who present evidence of their Covid-19 vaccination to the Student Health Services Office. The SHSC will provide an authorized status for campus in-person activities to vaccinated students.

Students in clinical rotations and practicums must adhere to the clinical site rules and regulations for Covid-19 preventive or mandatory testing.

Exemption for Vaccination

The Administrative Order 2021-509 from Puerto Rico Department of Health and the Article 5 of Law 25 of September 25, 1983, as amended, better known as the Immunization Law for Preschool Children and Students) allows exemptions to the immunization requirements due to religious or health reasons, including catastrophic diseases and pregnancy. In these cases, the student must complete an Immunization Exemption Form that must be certified by a physician in the case of exemption due to health conditions, and in the case of religious beliefs, the form must be filled, signed by the religious leader of the congregation, and sworn by an attorney.

Authorized exempt students will have to undergo Covid-19 PCR testing on a regular basis.

No exemptions will be allowed in the Medical and Nursing Programs; these students must comply with the CDC regulations for health professionals and the requirements for Covid-19 vaccination in PHSU and its affiliated clinical sites.

Recent Travelers

PHSU will abide by the [Puerto Rico government regulations](#) when arriving and traveling to Puerto Rico.

Vaccinated Recent Travelers

If the student follows the Puerto Rico Health Department standards at the moment of arrival, no quarantine time will be required.

Non-Vaccinated Recent Travelers

The student must present a test compliant with the Puerto Rico Health Department standards at the moment of arrival; such test must also comply with the requirements set forth on the [Mandatory Testing Policy](#).

The student will remain in quarantine for at least five (5) days, until a new test sample can be taken on the fifth (5th) day after arrival for the reintegration process. Test results will be managed as indicated in the [Test Results section of the Student Mandatory Testing Policy](#).

In-Campus Safety Measures

- Covid-19 vaccination evidence will be required to access PHSU campus facilities.
- Surgical or N-95 masks are highly recommended.
- Students, faculty, and staff must wear facemasks at all times in indoor spaces and other highly trafficked areas.
- Extracurricular, Co-curricular, and Academic activities must require the use of facemasks and may

request, specifically, the use of Surgical or N-95 masks.

- Students presenting symptoms related to Covid-19 must not attend classes on campus.

Self-Report and Notification of Exposure

The University has implemented protocols and procedures to allow students to self-report if: 1) they are diagnosed with Covid-19, or 2) were exposed to a confirmed Covid-19 patient. Regarding this policy, exposure is defined as “exposed or within proximity (less than 6 feet) to a confirmed Covid-19 patient for more than 10 minutes without personal protective equipment (PPE) (IE, facemasks)”. This includes any family or personal scenario(s), along with any clinical setting, or academic exercise where facemasks, face shield, and disposable coats should have been worn but were not.

Students must report if they are Covid-19 positive. Protocols for detected or positive cases will apply to self-reported cases. Students who have been diagnosed with Covid-19 and/or have been exposed to a confirmed Covid-19 patient must contact the Student Health Services Coordinator sending an email to studentcovidtest@psm.edu. The SHSC will then conduct a questionnaire that will determine further instructions on how to proceed.

PHSU encourages all students to self-report for the safety of the University community.

V Amendments:

This policy may be amended by the Institutional Administrative Board.

VI Repeal and Validity:

This policy does not repeal the provisions established by other University policies and/or governmental agency regulations, but establishes the requirement of the Covid-19 vaccine to access Campus Facilities.

This policy will be effective for the 2021 Fall term.

VII Approval:



José A. Torres-Ruíz, PhD
Chair of Institutional Administrative Committee

July 23, 2021

Date