

University of South Carolina College of Nursing
COVID Vaccination Status Memo
October 28, 2021

While available vaccines have proven highly effective in controlling COVID-19 and its variants to date, the virus continues to spread — particularly among unvaccinated populations. We know that in the next few weeks to months, the federal government is expected to implement a regulation that will require health systems across the country to ensure their employees, student learners, and faculty are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. This mandate will include the College of Nursing's clinical health partners. Health care facilities and academic settings across the country should make efforts now to get student learners and faculty vaccinated to make sure they comply when the rule takes effect.

I am not fully vaccinated. What happens if I am assigned to or scheduled to complete clinical at a facility that requires student learners and faculty to be fully vaccinated?

Although the CON does not require COVID vaccination specifically, third-party clinical facilities may mandate vaccination for student learners and clinical faculty providing care in their facility. The vast majority of our clinical sites have already mandated COVID vaccination. Many of these sites are not offering exemptions or declinations—this is becoming the norm. Student learners and clinical faculty are expected to meet clinical facility vaccination requirements and competencies.

I am not fully vaccinated. Will the CON ensure I am placed at a clinical facility that does not require student learners and faculty to be fully vaccinated?

To remain fair and unbiased to all student learners, all clinical learning experiences are determined by the student's course learning outcomes and learning needs. Your clinical facility *will not* be determined by your vaccination status. A clinical facility may elect to change or alter their vaccination policy based on their needs—policies are subject to change at that time.

- For instance, on October 8, 2021, Prisma Health sent out the following notification:
“Due to the high prevalence of disease, beginning immediately and until further notice, the Prisma Health Emergency Department (ED) is requiring any student learners (clinical or non-clinical) who request an experience or are currently scheduled for an ED rotation in any Prisma Health Emergency Department or Urgent Care space must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19. Personal protective equipment (PPE – mask/eye shields) are not a substitute.
 - Please note, if you are assigned a rotation in a different department/area, but you will physically enter the ED during your rotation for consults, you must also be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.”

I am not fully vaccinated. What are my next steps?

Partial vaccination is not considered fully vaccinated. If you received the first dose of the vaccination (Moderna or Pfizer) but not the second dose, you are not considered fully

vaccinated. Fully vaccinated means receiving two doses of Moderna or Pfizer vaccine, or one dose of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine. In addition, fully vaccinated persons are those who are ≥ 14 days post completion of the primary series of an FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccine. If you are in the process of completing the vaccination, continue to follow your health care provider's advice regarding the second dose. If you have not started the vaccination process and have questions, please contact your health care provider or the Center for Health and Well-Being. Please note that if you choose not to become fully vaccinated this may affect your academic progression, projected graduation date, and future employment opportunities.

I recently had a change in my vaccination status (i.e., received first or second dose, now fully vaccinated, etc.). What are my next steps?

Undergraduate students should update their vaccination status at

[Undergraduate COVID Vaccination Status Survey](#) (1) upon completion of the vaccination series; (2) completed the vaccination series and received a booster shot or; (3) recently begun the vaccination series. If you have already uploaded your vaccination card, you do not need to upload it again unless you have received a booster shot. Please upload booster verification. Once you have completed the series, please upload your vaccination card in CastleBranch.

Graduate students should update their vaccination status at

[Graduate COVID Vaccination Status Survey](#) (1) upon completion of the vaccination series; (2) completed the vaccination series and received a booster shot or; (3) recently begun the vaccination series. If you have already uploaded your vaccination card, you do not need to upload it again unless you have received a booster shot. Please upload booster verification. Once you have completed the series, please upload your vaccination card in CastleBranch.