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Board of Trustees Extends UW Mask Policy

September 17, 2021

Masks will continue to be required inside most University of Wyoming buildings where 6-foot social distancing isn't possible, following action by the UW Board of Trustees.

The board voted today (Friday) to extend the mask policy, as Albany County remains in the Wyoming Department of Health's "moderate-high transmission levels" category for COVID-19. There currently are 63 active cases among UW students and employees.

The policy will be revisited in subsequent meetings of the board.

"Our mask policy has helped us start our traditional fall semester without a major spike in COVID cases," UW President Ed Seidel says. "We appreciate the willingness of our community members to follow this policy in classrooms, labs and high-traffic areas such as the Wyoming Union so that we can continue with in-person learning and activities."

Exceptions to the indoor mask requirement are voluntary public events such as athletics and music, theater and dance performances; voluntary social events; and private, by-invitation events that involve rental and/or use of UW spaces on campus. For classes where the ability to see speakers' mouths is essential, faculty members have the ability to seek exceptions to the masking policy. As well, employees and students who have legitimate medical reasons to not wear masks can seek exceptions.

An additional exception approved by the board is for patrons of Half Acre Recreation and Wellness Center when participating in recreational activities, sports or fitness, or when a spectator at a voluntary public recreational event. Half Acre patrons will still be required to wear masks when entering and exiting the building, at all customer service desks and in meeting rooms.

UW continues to strongly encourage COVID-19 vaccinations -- as well as reporting of those vaccinations. Those who report vaccinations become eligible for weekly prize drawings. For employees, a quick reference guide (<https://web.archive.org/web/20210917200730/https://uwyo.teamdynamix.com/TDClient/1940/Portal/KB/ArticleDet?ID=130913>) has been created to help report vaccinations within UW's HCM. Students who receive their COVID-19 vaccinations should upload documentation to the Student Health Service patient portal as soon as their vaccine series is complete. This is as simple as taking a photo of your vaccination document and uploading the picture here: <http://patientportal.uwyo.edu> (https://web.archive.org/web/20210917200730/http://link.mediaoutreach.meltwater.com/ls/click?upn=aM2Qo-2BGGAjQL-2Be3WWurwxQfH1BGpZzzO0h4dU93TzudkNmQWIquJEEpSX2FT-2BF5Ta1bF_X6PHRo-2BkiGHveDKALyCFcbzVUHD131bU-2FEeqMiaCuH7JUzXKWmH7mFJ8NRZeOKmhcY7e6khiLp9y68QUj-2Bg1-2BENDG0mdDofcnAYTYJQwUVkOct12SGBsug9j2Apch7HPiOzB7xyfWXB3H4TJvou40yl2MreN5RLZq-2FACFc7aPIIuKyXJ6piqVQ3zfyjO4b-2FWqeexmaMq8Clz-2Ba-2FptsIxxZe1HRWY-2BURKHWMYBRk6oDK2JZvyBgfQIDn9hZHsk4Es0dLMjYkTOn297PkBP8i2eSDPTafGAMA3TKSLwS94jt52PjftmxKzrPryHcrknW6MVT3CfBs6g9qLXfEhw-2FaLA0N5Z-2BsjnOSqoNIDaQfIDY2gKA6Ht-2Fs8CBg-2FzXz20TKei3DKJAFzsmvhP7tiINQ-3D-3D), using your regular UW user ID and password. Alternatively, students can report their vaccinations by emailing photos of their vaccination documents to Student Health at studenthealth@uwyo.edu (<https://web.archive.org/web/20210917200730/mailto:studenthealth@uwyo.edu>).

As of Monday, 4,282 UW students had reported being vaccinated to Student Health. Of 2,877 total benefited employees, 2,191 -- 76.2 percent -- had reported receiving at least one vaccine dose to the HCM. Adding in nonbenefited employees, 3,457 of the total 6,372 staff and faculty members -- 54.3 percent -- had reported receiving at least one dose.

In an anonymous survey at the start of the semester, 88 percent of employees and 66 percent of students said they had been vaccinated.

"We would love to see those numbers continue to increase, as vaccinations truly are the best hope for ending this pandemic," Seidel says. "The vaccines are proven to be highly safe and effective in preventing infection and serious illness, even for the easily transmissible Delta variant."

UW continues to conduct weekly random-sample testing of 3 percent of the on-campus population. The test positivity rate of 1.47 percent last week was down from 2.89 percent the week before.

The latest statistics on UW's current COVID case numbers and vaccinations are available at www.uwyo.edu/alerts/campus-return/covid-dashboard.html (<https://web.archive.org/web/20210917200730/http://www.uwyo.edu/alerts/campus-return/covid-dashboard.html>).

More information about UW's COVID-19 response can be found at www.uwyo.edu/campus-return (<https://web.archive.org/web/20210917200730/http://www.uwyo.edu/campus-return>), which is being updated as information becomes available. Those with questions about testing and other COVID-19 issues may call (307) 766-COVID (2683) or email COVID19@uwyo.edu (<https://web.archive.org/web/20210917200730/mailto:COVID19@uwyo.edu>).

Questions specifically about the vaccine should be emailed to COVIDVX@uwyo.edu (<https://web.archive.org/web/20210917200730/mailto:COVIDVX@uwyo.edu>). A UW vaccine webpage has been established at www.uwyo.edu/alerts/campus-return/vaccination (<https://web.archive.org/web/20210917200730/http://www.uwyo.edu/alerts/campus-return/vaccination>).



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