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CSU to Implement COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement Upon FDA Approval

Requirement would go into effect for the fall 2021 term contingent upon one or more vaccines receiving full approval

(April 22, 2021) – In the interest of maintaining the health and safety of students, employees, guests and all members of campus communities, the California State University (CSU) joined the University of California (UC) today (April 22, 2021) in announcing that the universities intend to require faculty, staff and students who are accessing campus facilities at any university location to be immunized against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. This requirement will be conditioned upon full approval of one or more vaccines by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), as well as adequate availability of the fully approved vaccines. This requirement will become effective at the beginning of the fall 2021 term, or upon full FDA approval of the vaccine, whichever occurs later.

“Together, the CSU and UC enroll and employ more than one million students and employees across 33 major university campuses, so this is the most comprehensive and consequential university plan for COVID-19 vaccines in the country,” said CSU Chancellor Joseph I. Castro. “Consistent with previous CSU announcements related to the university’s response to the pandemic, we are sharing this information now to give students, their families and our employees ample time to make plans to be vaccinated prior to the start of the fall term.”

“Receiving a vaccine for the virus that causes COVID-19 is a key step people can take to protect themselves, their friends and family, and our campus communities while helping bring the pandemic to an end,” said UC President Michael V. Drake, M.D.

Prior to the implementation of any changes to the CSU’s existing immunization requirements, the CSU will engage the California State Student Association, the CSU Academic Senate and labor unions. The COVID-19 vaccination requirement would allow for students or employees to seek an exemption based on medical or religious grounds. The policy and related implementation details are under development and will be made available once the consultations have concluded.

“The state of California has been a leader in the administration of COVID-19 vaccines, and Californians receiving a vaccine has led to significantly reducing the transmission of COVID-19 in our state,” added Castro. “Continued vigilance will further mitigate the spread of the disease that has radically altered our lives over the past year. We will continue to strongly encourage all members of our respective university communities to receive a COVID-19 vaccination as soon as it is available to them.”

As announced in December 2020, the CSU plans for the majority of instruction and activities in fall 2021 to be in-person while acknowledging there will be variance across the campuses. The planned COVID-19 vaccine requirement will further enable the campuses to be repopulated.

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About the California State University

The California State University is the largest system of four-year higher education in the country, with 23 campuses, 56,000 faculty and staff and 486,000 students. Half of the CSU's students transfer from California community colleges. Created in 1960, the mission of the CSU is to provide high-quality, affordable education to meet the ever-changing needs of California. With its commitment to quality, opportunity, and student success, the CSU is renowned for superb teaching, innovative research and for producing job-ready graduates. Each year, the CSU awards nearly 129,000 degrees. One in every 20 Americans holding a college degree is a graduate of the CSU and our alumni are 3.9 million strong. Connect with and learn more about the CSU in the CSU NewsCenter.