

Vaccine mandates come to colleges: Rutgers becomes one of the first schools to require COVID shots for in-person instruction this fall

Rutgers University is requiring students attending classes in person this fall to be vaccinated against [Covid-19](#).

It is among the first US universities to make such a mandate as schools begin preparing for a return to campus life after a year of remote or hybrid learning due to the pandemic.

“In support of Rutgers’ commitment to health and safety for all members of its community, the University will be updating its Immunization Requirements for Students to include the COVID-19 vaccine,” Rutgers’ leadership wrote in a [message](#) to the university community on [March 25].

“This health policy update means that, with limited exceptions, all students planning to attend in the Fall 2021 semester must be fully vaccinated.”

Students may request an exemption for medical or religious reasons, the university said. Otherwise, proof of vaccination will be required for all students attending in-person classes.

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Students overwhelmingly believe that universities and colleges have the right to mandate inoculation, according to a [poll by College Pulse](#), a research company that focuses on colleges and universities, published in January. In a survey of 1,000 students, 71% said “colleges have the right to require students to get vaccinated before returning to campus.”

Hayley Slusser, editor-in-chief of Rutgers’ student-run newspaper, The Daily Targum, called the university’s decision “the right choice.”

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