OFFICE OF THE CHANCELLOR

Dear CUNY Staff and Faculty,

As we draw closer to the start of an increasingly in-person Fall 2021 semester, I want to share details of an important piece of the University’s reopening plan that mandates regular testing for anyone who is unvaccinated or who chooses not to disclose their vaccination status. As we previously announced, starting on August 16, anyone entering a CUNY facility for any reason will need to be fully vaccinated (defined as 14 days beyond the last vaccination shot) or show proof of a negative COVID-19 test taken within the past seven days.

After a rigorous search, we have selected Applied DNA Clinical Labs LLC (ADCL) to provide extensive on-site testing throughout the University, starting today. On Monday, August 9, all faculty and staff who have not provided proof of vaccination in CUNYfirst will receive an email to enroll in the testing program by clicking on the link in the email.

Upload Vax Info if you are Vaccinated

Based on our surveys, thankfully most of CUNY’s staff and faculty are vaccinated and I continue to emphasize the importance of getting vaccinated as the best defense we know against COVID-19 and its variants. As outlined in my recent letter, vaccinated faculty and staff can upload their vaccination verification documents to CUNYfirst up to 10 days before the first week they are due back. These voluntary submissions will facilitate your access to a campus or office throughout the Fall and will also remove you from the need to participate in the weekly testing program. For a guide to submitting your information to CUNYfirst, please visit here.

20 Testing Locations

ADCL, through its safeCircle™ program, will oversee testing for all members of the CUNY community who are unvaccinated, or choose not to reveal their vaccination status – fulfilling one of CUNY’s crucial pillars of our reopening strategy. Testing sites will open at 18 of our colleges in all five boroughs, as well as at two CUNY Central locations. Six testing centers are already in operation, the rest will continue to open this week, and all 20 will be up and running by Monday, August 16. CUNY faculty, staff and students will all be required to test through this program. Test results will be processed within 24 hours (48 hours on weekends) and can be accessed by computer or smartphone.
ADCL has retained Cleared4 health verification management system to provide the platform through which participants can register for the program, schedule a test appointment, receive test results, and display proof of testing. Cleared4 will send the email with details on how to enroll in the testing program today. Once registered, participants will receive an overview of the program and instructions on how to proceed. Appointment scheduling, negative test results, and other communications will all flow through the Cleared4 platform.

**Time to Test**

Unvaccinated faculty and staff returning to work the week of August 16 have to get tested this week. Those returning the week of August 23 have to test the week of August 16, and thereafter no more than 7 days before being in a CUNY facility. Testing is by appointment, but walk-ins may be accepted on a standby basis once those with appointments have been tested. Employees will be given 30 minutes of paid time if the testing site is on their campus or office location, and 45 minutes if they need to travel to an off-site location.

ADCL utilizes a PCR test with a nasal swab that is less invasive than the longer-stemmed swabs used elsewhere but is still highly sensitive and designed to detect COVID-19 before a person becomes symptomatic and can begin spreading the virus.

**Testing Exceptions**

Anyone required to be tested can opt out of the testing program at any time by voluntarily showing proof that they are fully vaccinated. You may also opt out of testing if you have an approved request for a fully remote accommodation. Approved or pending requests need to be indicated on the Vaccination Verification menu in CUNYfirst and will be verified by campus Human Resources offices after they are submitted.

**Random Testing**

To help contain the spread of COVID-19 in our community, the testing program also includes periodic screening of a random sampling of vaccinated individuals across the University. The frequency of such testing will depend upon the coronavirus positivity rate and the prevalence of variants among other factors.

**Helpful Offices and Links**

For more information about CUNY’s COVID-19 testing program, please see the Testing FAQ. For a list of testing locations, visit here. For general frequently asked questions, please refer to the Getting Back to Working in Person FAQ. If you still have questions, please contact your HR office.
As always, the health and safety of every member of our community continues to be the objective that governs our decisions. We believe these testing protocols and measures give us the best chance to create a safe, successful and rewarding academic experience for our community this Fall. We wish you and yours good health and safety as the semester approaches, and we look forward to being together again soon.

Sincerely,

Felo