

Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Current COVID-19 Prevention Program (“CPP”)

February 10, 2022

The purpose of this FAQ is to provide a quick reference for the CHSU campus community regarding the current policy in place for COVID-19 response and prevention. The full CPP for both students and staff can be found on the CHSU website at <https://chsu.edu/coronavirus/>.

1. Why is it important to get vaccinated and boosted?

As a healthcare education institution, CHSU, its students, faculty, and staff must take steps to protect our community from the COVID-19 pandemic, and to serve as role models in the community. Vaccination is the best protection against COVID-19.

2. How does CHSU determine its COVID-19 policy?

Under the authority of the President, CHSU’s President’s Executive Council is the lead governance body managing the University’s COVID-19 response. The CPP has changed over time as the pandemic has continued. Since its inception it has followed industry best practices, applicable state and federal laws, and public health guidance including from the Centers for Disease Control and the California Department of Public Health. Information regarding COVID-19, including science-based public health guidance, changes rapidly. When the CPP conflicts with changes to law and public health guidance, CHSU follows the updated requirements.

3. Why does the President’s Executive Council determine the CPP?

CHSU’s Board of Directors has delegated authority to the President. The President has directed the President’s Executive Council to maintain responsibility for ensuring the CPP and the University’s COVID-19 response complies with science-based public health guidance, and applicable law. The President’s Executive Council is comprised of the Provost, the Dean of the College of Pharmacy, the Dean of the College of Osteopathic Medicine, the Vice Presidents of Human Resources, Communications, and Operations, the Chief Financial Officer, and legal counsel.

4. Is the local public health department consulted?

Yes. CHSU consults with the Fresno County public health department as needed to ensure it is implementing the CPP and public health guidance correctly. CHSU’s primary goal is to keep our campus and the community safe.

5. Why is the University requiring COVID-19 booster vaccines?

The University has required vaccination against COVID-19, subject to exemptions for medical or sincerely held religious beliefs, because it is the best defense against the COVID-19 pandemic. The CDC and California Department of Public Health now recommend all vaccinated individuals obtain a booster shot. In requiring the booster vaccine, CHSU is following public health guidance to keep our community safe.

6. If a student does not get vaccinated, could they be dismissed from the program?
Yes. If a student does not obtain their COVID-19 vaccine and booster shot once eligible, and they do not otherwise qualify for a medical or sincerely held religious belief exemption, they are in violation of university policy and are subject to discipline under the University's student code of conduct, up to and including dismissal from their academic program.
7. Could graduation be delayed for students who do not get vaccinated or boosted?
Yes. Even with a medical or sincerely held religious belief exemption, students may not be able to secure the clinical/experiential rotation sites necessary for graduation in time to graduate because most health care facilities are now requiring both COVID-19 vaccination and booster shots to protect both students, staff, and patients.
8. Why is the University using the California digital vaccine record as proof of vaccination going forward?
The University is shifting towards requiring a California digital vaccine record, as opposed to paper vaccine cards, because the California digital vaccine record is the most reliable. The digital records do not include information different from the COVID-19 paper vaccine cards but is a verified source and decreases the risk that the University may inadvertently rely on an inaccurate record. This is another safety precaution to keep students and staff safe.
9. What if I want an exemption to the vaccine requirement?
CHSU provides exemptions to the vaccination requirement as required by law, including for medical and sincerely held religious belief. CHSU does not provide exemptions for personal preference or because someone's opinion on vaccination differs from that of the public health guidance. If you have a medical condition or sincerely held religious belief preventing you from receiving the vaccine or a booster shot, you should apply for an exemption. Students in the College of Pharmacy must apply through the Office of Academic Affairs, students in the College of Osteopathic Medicine must apply through the Office of Student Affairs, and employees must apply through the Office of Human Resources. Those seeking an exemption must complete the appropriate paperwork, and provide supporting documentation as requested by the University. Medical exemptions will require a note from a treating healthcare provider.
10. What if I experience side effects from the COVID-19 vaccine or a booster shot?
Students who need time off from school for recovery from the temporary side effects of vaccination should contact their college just as they would if they were sick. Employees may use sick time to obtain the vaccine during paid time, and for recovery from side effects of the vaccine.