Guidelines for International Students Regarding COVID-19 Vaccinations

Updated 7/27/2021

San Mateo Colleges of Silicon Valley, operated by the San Mateo County Community College District, is committed to protecting the health and well-being of students, faculty, staff, administrators, and the communities we serve, as well as maintaining higher education access and attainment for our students.

In light of the evidence established to date regarding the safety and effectiveness of available COVID-19 vaccines, the San Mateo Colleges of Silicon Valley hereby requires that all international students attending classes, programs, utilizing services or participating in any activity on any campus must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19, unless approved as exempt due to verified medical or religious reasons (as defined in federal or state policy).

This vaccine requirement is effective on the first day of the fall semester, August 16, 2021. The Chancellor shall establish administrative procedures to implement this policy and further instructions on how to provide authorization for disclosure of vaccination records will be communicated shortly [Board Policy will be approved in July].

For now, please refer to the following Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) regarding the mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policy.

1. Is San Mateo Colleges of Silicon Valley requiring vaccination?
   • As of July 14, 2021, San Mateo Colleges of Silicon Valley (SMCSV) is requiring students who plan to be on campus to be fully vaccinated by the beginning of the 2021 fall semester.

2. Which vaccines are approved by SMCSV’s Office of Admission?
   • SMCSV closely follows the guidelines set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and as of July 1, 2021, the following vaccines have been approved by the CDC and World Health Organization (WHO):
     - Pfizer
     - AstraZeneca
     - Covishield
     - Johnson & Johnson
     - Moderna
     - Sinopharm
     - Sinovac
3. Given the current student vaccination requirement at SMCSV, is it advisable to take the vaccine in my home country or can I take it upon arrival in California?
   - It is advisable to take one of the approved vaccines in your home country. You may also get vaccinated upon arrival in California at either [San Francisco International Airport (SFO)](https://www.sfo.com) or [Los Angeles International Airport (LAX)](https://www.laxport.gov), at no additional cost to you.

4. What happens if I’m only able to take one dose of a vaccine not available in the United States?
   - If there is high level of transmission in your home country and you have access to one of the vaccines currently authorized for emergency use by either the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)](https://www.fda.gov) or the [World Health Organization (WHO)](https://www.who.int), it is recommended that you get vaccinated even if you cannot complete a series. With a two-dose series COVID-19 vaccine there is still some protection with the first dose. However, upon arrival in the U.S. arrangements will need to be made to secure the full course of one of the vaccines available.

5. Can I take my second dose in California, or will I be required to vaccinate again?
   - You can receive the second dose in California if your first dose was either the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine. If you are unable to complete a two-dose vaccination series of a WHO-approved vaccine in your home country, or if the first dose is not an approved vaccine, the CDC recommends you receive the full series of an FDA-approved vaccine once you arrive in California. We recommend you check with your medical professional to determine when it’s safe to start the new series.

6. If I am unvaccinated, do I need to quarantine upon arrival in California?
   - Please see the [CDC’s website](https://www.cdc.gov) for the most up-to-date guidance on what is required for travelers at ports of entry.

7. What proof of vaccination will I be required to bring in case I get vaccinated in my home country?
   - Vaccination records may vary by country. Further information with instructions on how to provide authorization for disclosure of vaccination records or to upload a copy of the Vaccination Record Card will be communicated soon. If you do not have any documentation of vaccination, you will need to be prepared to secure one of the approved vaccinations upon arrival in the U.S.
8. By when is it advisable to reach the SMCSV campus to complete the quarantine period to be able to start in-person classes?

- According to the CDC, unvaccinated travelers are required to quarantine for 7 days upon arrival. Please arrive at least 10 days in advance to complete all necessary testing and quarantine. Click here to find suggestions for hotels and short-term housing near the three colleges.

9. I have already had COVID-19, do I still need to be vaccinated?

- Individuals who have been infected with COVID-19 and have recovered should still get the COVID-19 vaccine after the appropriate period of time.

10. What if I cannot access an approved vaccine in my home country?

- If none of the approved vaccines are available to you in your home country, you will be able to receive an approved vaccine upon arrival in California. Please use this website to find a vaccination center closest to you.

11. Will my visa status affect my ability to get vaccinated in California?

- Immigration status does not affect your eligibility to receive a COVID-19 vaccine in the USA. The vaccine is provided at no cost to anyone regardless of citizenship or insurance.

12. Will I be able to submit evidence of my COVID-19 vaccine in a language other than English?

- You can submit vaccine records in another language as long as the following is clearly visible:
  - Product name/manufacturer
  - Lot number
  - Date(s) of receipt of dose

13. Where can I find the latest updates and resources for international students?

- You can find the latest updates and resources on your college’s website:
  - Cañada College
  - College of San Mateo
  - Skyline College