

To: NSHE Board of Regents  
Chancellor Melody Rose

From: President Brian Sandoval, UNR  
President Frederico Zaragosa, CSN  
President DeRionne Pollard, NSC  
President Kumud Acharya, DRI  
President Joyce Helens, GBC  
Officer in Charge J. Kyle Dalpe, WNC  
Officer in Charge Elena Bubnova, TMCC  
President Keith Whitfield, UNLV

Date: December 27, 2021

RE: Emergency Code Revision, Employee COVID-19 Vaccine Requirement

We are writing to provide you with a consensus view from the presidents of all eight NSHE institutions on the matters you will deliberate on at the upcoming board meeting on December 30, 2021. We remain supportive of your action on September 30, 2021, to require vaccinations of employees as a condition of employment. We believe that rolling back the employee COVID vaccine requirement adds to the climate of uncertainty and creates complex administrative and serious safety consequences. Of the options before you, we support maintaining the existing code provisions for several reasons. Those reasons include but are not limited to:

- 1) Staying the course will underscore the integrity of the NSHE and Board of Regents leadership's reliance on scientific and health experts to guide COVID policy matters.
- 2) The COVID-19 Vaccine requirement will preserve the operational safety needs of our campuses.
- 3) The COVID-19 Vaccine requirement provides additional protection against the impact of the Omicron variant which is reported to be more contagious than the Delta variant and is surging in higher education institutions across the country.
- 4) We value our faculty and staff, and while some have chosen not to be vaccinated, our campus communities have overwhelmingly complied with the current requirements and procedures.
- 5) The decision to enlist a vaccination mandate was supported by the faculty senates of our universities and colleges.

We believe that rolling back the employee COVID vaccine requirement would interrupt what has been agreed to, supported, and operationally followed at each of our campuses. We currently have a consistent and successful way to address this complex policy across the NSHE System. We also believe that rescinding this mandate would create confusion as to our commitment to keep employees safe. Although we cannot mandate student vaccinations

without the State of Nevada Board of Health or legislative action, we can for employees, and we support that fully.

The employee mandate has already passed the critical deadline, December 1, wherein employees had to make their decision and received notices of termination. An extension of two weeks to get vaccinated will likely result in few unvaccinated people complying with this requirement, as they have known about the requirements of this policy since September.

Lastly, the Federal OSHA regulation for vaccination, testing, and face coverings for those employers with over 100 employees is now moving forward with employers needing to comply by January 2022. This federal mandate would seem to include institutions of higher education such as those in the NSHE.

Thank you for considering our position in regard to NSHE employee mandated COVID 19 vaccinations.