



COLLEGE OF
MOUNT SAINT VINCENT

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

June 24, 2021

Dear Students,

We have worked together tirelessly to manage through a global pandemic that has significantly impacted our community. While COVID-19 is not yet fully behind us, vaccines have dramatically lowered the risk of infection and made it possible for us to plan for a fully in-person fall semester without mask or physical distancing requirements for vaccinated members of our community. We are filled with hope and excitement about everything this means to us at this right place on the river—and we can't wait to welcome you back to campus again, in-person, this fall.

This return to normalcy will be made possible by following the data and evolving science while maintaining our firm commitment to each other. Despite lower risks today and the downward trends, it is clear that widespread vaccination builds widespread immunity, and the full experience we strive to continue to offer in the fall will only be assured with the vaccination of our College community.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published [Guidance for Institutions of Higher Education](#), advising that complete elimination of masking and distancing requirements for everyone would be advisable only if everyone is fully vaccinated. Understanding that there will always be those in our community who should not be vaccinated, we must take care to limit exceptions and ensure that those who are not vaccinated are still able to participate in the College of Mount Saint Vincent experience without fear for their personal health and safety. This combination of CDC guidance, as well as the College's own experience and endorsement from our Board of Trustees, has informed the following decisions regarding vaccinations.

Vaccinations* will be required for all students attending the College of Mount Saint Vincent, with exemptions for medical reasons and sincerely held religious beliefs.

During the past academic year, we weathered significant surges in COVID-19 cases throughout New York City. We achieved this because you masked up, washed up, and backed up—all while participating in campus testing and self-quarantine. Now, we must do everything possible to avoid repeating the challenges, and we must ensure that students who cannot be vaccinated are still able to participate in campus life and in-person learning. *It is essential that every student who can be vaccinated, is vaccinated.*

Protecting yourself, your loved ones, and the Mount community against COVID-19 is the greatest prize of all after the past year, but we plan to throw in a little something extra to reward those who have gotten their shot—and to encourage the entire College community to participate. From full-tuition scholarships to a new MacBook and free food to sporting tickets, here's some of the cool upcoming COVID-19 vaccine incentives** at the Mount:

- Free tuition for a year

- Free room and board
- MacBook Air
- Reserved parking space on campus
- \$500 loaded to My Dollars
- Priority access to the housing lottery
- Priority building and room selection
- Priority registration
- Broadway show tickets
- Sporting event tickets
- Free books for a year
- Free summer class
- Free winter class

Stay tuned for [additional details](#) on how to enter and upcoming drawing dates (there will be four!). Proof of immunization is required for the incentivized prizes. Those who cannot receive the vaccine for medical reasons and sincerely held religious beliefs will also be included in the giveaway once their exemption has been approved. Students are encouraged to visit our [COVID-19 resources](#) for more information on vaccination requirements and to visit our [Health Services page](#) to confirm vaccination status or request an exemption. The deadline for students to report that they have received the full course of vaccine doses (one or two, depending on the vaccine) is **October 15, 2021**.

We're here to answer your questions and help you find a vaccine site near you, including at the College. For those without access to a vaccine, Mount Saint Vincent will offer clinics to students and their families during Welcome Weekend. Please look for additional information and instructions regarding the College's vaccine clinics as we gear up for the fall semester.

We also understand that members of our College community—regardless of vaccination status—may prefer to limit their risk further by continuing to wear masks while around others. We fully respect and support that personal decision.

To every member of our 'Phin Family—I greatly appreciate the selfless commitment to public health guidelines that helped us manage through and emerge stronger from this pandemic. I am confident that this “new normal” will make us an even more resilient, compassionate, connected, and service-minded community. I am looking forward to another academic year filled with all of the joy and benefits of the shared experience we cherish at the Mount—along with the new tools, methods, and expertise that we have developed throughout the pandemic.

Thank you, again, for your continued commitment to our community's health and safety—and for supporting this next step toward a return to another successful, fully in-person fall semester.

Sincerely,



Susan R. Burns, Ph.D.
President

*COVID-19 vaccinations will be required for the entire College of Mount Saint Vincent community once fully approved by the FDA.
**The value of all incentivized prizes may be taxable to the recipient.