



Office of the Governor

**MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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August 17, 2021

## **COVID-19 vaccination required for 2021 State Fair**

SANTA FE – Under a public health order issued Tuesday by the state of New Mexico, vaccinations are required for the 2021 New Mexico State Fair, which is scheduled to begin Sept. 9.

This policy follows the state announcement Tuesday that vaccines will be required for workers in certain medical and high-risk congregate care settings, including hospitals and nursing homes, among other congregate care settings.

All persons who are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine must show proof of being fully vaccinated to enter the grounds of the state fair. The policy is intended to ensure the safety of fair-goers, including and particularly children under the age of 12 who are not yet eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, as the “Delta” variant of the virus spreads rapidly among unvaccinated New Mexicans and contributes to spiking COVID-19 hospitalizations.

New Mexicans may schedule their COVID-19 vaccination at [VaccineNM.org](https://www.vaccineNM.org).

Through the month of August, any New Mexican receiving a first or second shot of Pfizer or Moderna, or a first-and-only shot of Johnson & Johnson, will receive \$100 from the state. To qualify for the incentive, New Mexicans must register at [VaccineNM.org](https://www.vaccineNM.org).

Various local governments and private-sector organizations have enacted vaccination requirements for employees and patrons in recent weeks throughout the U.S as stagnant vaccination rates threaten hospital capacity and economic recovery nationwide. The [Las Vegas Raiders on Monday](#), for instance, became the latest professional sports team to require proof of vaccination to attend home games during the upcoming season.

There are limited available exemptions – for medical, disability or religious reasons – to the state’s vaccination policy for the fair. The process through which an individual may document a legitimate exemption is outlined in the public health order, which is attached to this news release.

An individual providing documentation of one of those exemptions must, to gain entrance to the fair, provide proof of a negative COVID-19 test from within 48 hours of their entering the fairgrounds.

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MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM  
Governor

DAVID R. SCRASE, M.D.  
Acting Cabinet Secretary

**PUBLIC HEALTH ORDER  
NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
ACTING SECRETARY DAVID R. SCRASE, M.D.**

**August 17, 2021**

**Public Health Emergency Order Requiring All School Workers Comply with Certain Health Requirements and Requiring Congregate Care Facility Workers, Hospital Workers, and Employees of the Office of the Governor Be Fully Vaccinated**

**WHEREAS**, on January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization announced the emergence of a novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) that had not previously circulated in humans, but has been found to have adapted to humans such that it is contagious and easily spread from one person to another and one country to another;

**WHEREAS**, COVID-19 has been confirmed in New Mexico since March 11, 2020, when the New Mexico Department of Health confirmed the first cases of individuals infected with COVID-19 in New Mexico and additional cases have been confirmed each day since then;

**WHEREAS**, on March 11, 2020, because of the spread of COVID-19, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham issued Executive Order 2020-004 declaring that a Public Health Emergency exists in New Mexico under the Public Health Emergency Response Act, and invoked her authority under the All Hazards Emergency Management Act;

**WHEREAS**, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham has renewed the declaration of a Public Health Emergency through September 15, 2021;

**WHEREAS**, over 36 million people have been infected with COVID-19 in the United States, with over 615,000 related deaths, and the New Mexico Department of Health has reported 220,000 positive COVID-19 cases and 4,450 related deaths in New Mexico;

**WHEREAS**, the currently available COVID-19 vaccines are safe and the most effective way of preventing infection, serious illness, and death;

**WHEREAS**, widespread vaccination protects New Mexico’s health care system as vaccines decrease the need for emergency services and hospitalization;

**WHEREAS**, the refusal to receive the COVID-19 vaccine not only endangers the individual but the entire community, and further jeopardizes the progress the State has made against the pandemic by allowing the virus to transmit more freely and mutate into more transmissible or deadly variants;

**OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY**

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**WHEREAS**, one such highly transmissible variant, B.1.617.2, commonly known as the Delta variant, now accounts for the majority of new infections in the United States;

**WHEREAS**, New Mexico has recorded a significant increase in new COVID-19 cases in recent weeks, with cases expected to rise even further in the Fall and Winter months;

**WHEREAS**, the further spread of COVID-19 in the State of New Mexico poses a threat to the health, safety, and wellbeing of children who are not yet eligible to receive a vaccine; persons who cannot be vaccinated due to medical reasons; immunocompromised individuals; and vulnerable persons including persons in hospitals, long-term care facilities, and other congregate care facilities; and

**WHEREAS**, the New Mexico Department of Health possesses legal authority pursuant to the Public Health Act, NMSA 1978, Sections 24-1-1 to -40, the Public Health Emergency Response Act, NMSA 1978, Sections 12-10A-1 to -19, the Department of Health Act, NMSA 1978, Sections 9-7-1 to -18, and inherent constitutional police powers of the New Mexico state government, to preserve and promote public health and safety, to maintain and enforce rules for the control of a condition of public health importance, and issue rules for immunization against conditions of public health importance.

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, David R. Scrase, M.D., Acting Secretary of the New Mexico Department of Health, in accordance with authority vested in me by the Constitution and the Laws of the State of New Mexico, and as directed by the Governor pursuant to the full scope of emergency powers under the All Hazard Emergency Management Act, do hereby declare the current outbreak of COVID-19 a condition of public health importance, as defined in NMSA 1978, Section 24-1-2(A), and hereby ORDER and DIRECT as follows:**

## **DEFINITIONS**

For the purposes of this Order, the following terms shall have the meaning given to them, except where the context clearly requires otherwise:

(1) “Congregate care facility” means nursing homes, assisted living facilities, adult day cares, hospice facilities, rehabilitation facilities, State correctional facilities, juvenile justice facilities, residential treatment centers, the New Mexico State Veterans’ Home, and community homes.

(2) “Congregate care facility worker” means any paid or unpaid individuals working in a congregate care facility. This includes workers providing services who have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients or residents in a congregate care facility. A congregate care facility worker includes contractors who perform services on-site at the congregate care facility.

(3) “Fully vaccinated” means two weeks after an individual completed the entire recommended series of vaccination with a vaccine approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), including on an emergency use basis, to prevent COVID-19. An individual will be fully vaccinated two weeks after the second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19

vaccines. An individual will be fully vaccinated two weeks after a single-dose Johnson and Johnson's Jassen COVID-19 vaccine.

(4) "Hospital" means any public hospital, profit or nonprofit private hospital, general hospital, or special hospital.

(5) "Hospital Worker" means all paid and unpaid individuals who work on-site in a hospital in a setting where care is provided to patients or patients have access for any purpose. This includes workers who have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients or COVID-19 airborne aerosols. Hospital workers include, but are not limited to, nurses, physicians nursing assistants, technicians, therapists, phlebotomists, pharmacists, students and trainees, contractual staff not employed by the hospital, and persons not directly involved in patient care, but who could be exposed to infection agents that can be transmitted in the hospital (e.g. clerical, dietary, environmental services, laundry, security, and volunteer personnel).

(6) "School worker" means all paid and unpaid adults serving in a private school, public school, or charter school.

(7) "Qualifying medical condition" means a permanent or temporary medical condition recognized by the FDA or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as a contra-indication to COVID-19 vaccination.

## **DIRECTIVES**

### **I HEREBY DIRECT AS FOLLOWS:**

(1) Beginning Monday August 23, 2021, all school workers in any private school, public school, or charter school who are not fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or are unwilling to provide proof of vaccination to their respective supervisors shall:

- a. Provide adequate proof that the school worker has tested negative for COVID-19 on a weekly basis; and
- b. Wear a mask or multilayer cloth face covering at all times indoors during the course and scope of their employment except when eating or drinking. An unvaccinated school worker will only be exempt from wearing a mask indoors if adequate proof is provided that the school worker has been instructed otherwise by a licensed healthcare provider.

(2) All private schools, public schools, and charter schools shall maintain records of school worker vaccination status in accordance with applicable privacy laws and regulations. The records regarding a worker's vaccination status shall be provided to the Department of Health promptly upon request.

(3) All hospital workers, congregate care facility workers, and employees of the Office of the Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham are required to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19

unless they qualify for an exemption. If an individual does not qualify for an exemption, the individual shall:

- a. Receive the first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine within 10 days of the effective date of this Order and their second dose within 40 days of their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine; and
- b. Provide proof of vaccination to the appropriate person or supervisor:
  - i. Hospital workers and congregate care facility workers shall provide proof of vaccination or exemption to their respective supervisors.
  - ii. Contractors who are hospital workers shall provide proof of vaccination to the operator of the hospital in which the contractor provides on-site services.
  - iii. Employees of the Office of Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham shall provide proof of vaccination to the Chief Operations Officer.

(4) The workers subject to Section (3) of this Order may be exempt from the COVID-19 vaccination requirement set forth above if they have a qualifying medical condition which immunization would endanger their health, or they are entitled under the Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA), Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), or any other applicable law to a disability-related reasonable accommodation or a sincerely held religious belief accommodation. Nothing in this Order precludes the entities which employ or contract with these workers from providing disability-related reasonable accommodations and religious accommodations to the requirements of this Order as required by law.

- a. To be eligible for an exemption due a qualifying medical condition, the individual must provide their employer or operator of the facility they contract with a statement from a physician, nurse practitioner, or other medical professional licensed to practice in New Mexico stating that the individual qualifies for the exemption and indicating the probable duration of the individual's inability to receive the vaccine;
- b. To be eligible for an exemption due to a disability, the individual must provide their employer or the operator of the hospital or congregate care facility they contract with accommodation documentation from a physician, nurse practitioner, or other medical professional licensed to practice in New Mexico stating that the individual has a disability that necessitates an accommodation and the probable duration of the need for the accommodation; or
- c. To be eligible for an exemption due to a sincerely held religious belief, the individual must document that the request for an accommodation has been made and provide their employer or the operator of the facility they contract with a statement regarding the manner in which the administration of a

COVID-19 vaccine conflicts with the religious observance, practice, or belief of the individual.

(5) If an operator of a hospital, operator of a congregate care facility, or the Office of Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham determines a worker to have met the requirements of an exemption pursuant to Section (4), the unvaccinated exempt worker shall:

- a. Provide adequate proof that the individual has tested negative for COVID-19 on a weekly basis; and
- b. Wear a mask or multilayer cloth face covering at all times indoors at the hospital or congregate care facility except when eating or drinking. An unvaccinated worker will only be exempt from wearing a mask indoors if adequate proof is provided that the individual has been instructed otherwise by a licensed healthcare provider.

(6) The operator of a hospital, operator of a congregate care facility, and the Office of Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham shall maintain records of all workers' vaccination or exemption status in accordance with applicable privacy laws and regulations. If a worker is exempt pursuant to Section (4), then the operator or employer also must maintain records of the worker's testing results pursuant to Section (5). The records regarding a worker's vaccination or exemption status shall be provided to the Department of Health promptly upon request.

(7) Hospital workers, congregate care facility workers, and employees of the Office of the Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham shall provide proof of vaccination or records of their exemption status to the Department of Health if requested.

(8) All persons who are eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine and enter the grounds of the New Mexico State Fair from September 9-19, 2021 must provide adequate proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 to a State Fair official unless the individual qualifies for an exemption. A person may be exempt from the COVID-19 vaccination requirement set forth in this section if they have a qualifying medical condition which immunization would endanger their health, or they are entitled under the ADA, Title VII, or any other applicable law to a disability-related reasonable accommodation or a sincerely held religious belief accommodation. Nothing in this Order precludes the New Mexico State Fair from providing disability-related reasonable accommodations and religious accommodations to the requirements of this Order as required by law. The requirements for an exemption are as follows:

- a. To be eligible for an exemption due a qualifying medical condition, the individual must provide a State Fair official with a statement from a physician, nurse practitioner, or other medical professional licensed to practice in New Mexico stating that the individual qualifies for the exemption and indicating the probable duration of the individual's inability to receive the vaccine;
- b. To be eligible for an exemption due to a disability, the individual must provide a State Fair Official with accommodation documentation from a

physician, nurse practitioner, or other medical professional licensed to practice in New Mexico stating that the individual has a disability that necessitates an accommodation and the probable duration of the need for the accommodation; or

- c. To be eligible for an exemption due to a sincerely held religious belief, the individual must document that the request for an accommodation has been made and provide a State Fair official a statement regarding the manner in which the administration of a COVID-19 vaccine conflicts with the religious observance, practice, or belief of the individual.

(9) If a State Fair official determines an individual entering the grounds of the New Mexico State Fair has met the requirements of an exemption pursuant to Section (8), the unvaccinated individual shall provide adequate proof that they have tested negative for COVID-19 within 48 hours prior to entering the fair grounds.

(10) New Mexico State Fair officials shall maintain records of the vaccination or exemption status of all persons entering the grounds New Mexico State Fair in accordance with applicable privacy laws and regulations. The records regarding an individual's vaccination or exemption status shall be provided to the Department of Health promptly upon request. All individuals entering the grounds of the New Mexico State Fair shall provide proof of vaccination or records of their exemption status and negative test to the Department of Health, if requested.

**I FURTHER DIRECT** as follows:

(1) This Order shall be broadly disseminated in English, Spanish, and other appropriate languages to the citizens of the State of New Mexico.

(2) Nothing in this Order is intended to restrain or preempt local authorities or state agencies from enacting more stringent restrictions than those required by the Order.

(3) The New Mexico Department of Health, the New Mexico Department of Public Safety, the New Mexico Public Education Department, and all other State departments and agencies are authorized to take all appropriate steps to ensure compliance with this Order.

(4) Any person, hospital, or congregate care facility who willfully violates this Order may be subject to civil administrative penalties available at law.

(5) This Order shall take effect on August 17, 2021 and remain in effect for the duration of the public health emergency first declared in Executive Order 2020-004 and any subsequent renewals of that public health emergency declaration, unless otherwise rescinded.

ATTEST:

*Maggie Toulouse Oliver*

MAGGIE TOULOUSE OLIVER  
SECRETARY OF STATE



DONE AT THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE  
THIS 17TH DAY OF AUGUST 2021

WITNESS MY HAND AND THE GREAT  
SEAL OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO

*David R. Scrase*

DAVID R. SCRASE, M.D.  
ACTING SECRETARY OF THE  
NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH