



Date Presented
9-13-2021

Type of action
RECOMMENDATION

Final vote
5-1-0

2122-0001: Employee Vaccination

Sponsored by: Weiser, Madeya, Becca Emery, Sara Ostermeier

Co-sponsored by: Sonia Alfandre, Leonardo Amaral, Khami Auerbach, Laura Alvaro, Erin Bevan, Keeley Firinne, Laurie Hall, Andrew Hyland, Oscar Izenson, Emma Johansen, Kayla Joyce, Kellen Ko, Kristian Labrie, Abby Leary, Josie Mastropierro, Olivia Merryman, Casey Miller, Sarah Moon, Emmie Morgan, Anna Nicchitta, Jess Packes, Kionna Pannazzo, Mark Puskey, Em Reynolds, Lindsay Sayer, Hannah Schultz, Gabrielle Shapiro, Reilly Shingler, Tatum Siegel, Charlotte Sienkiewicz, Alexandra Stewart, Krista Sullivan, Nick Traficante, Madeline Tran, Laura Van Voris, Dan Coakwell (faculty), Martha Guth (faculty), Wendy Mehne (faculty), Alison Wahl (faculty)

Whereas Ithaca College employees are not required to be vaccinated. Official language on the [Ithaca College “Covid Health and Safety” Webpage](#) states, “Ithaca College students are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19 disease and we strongly encourage all faculty, staff, and affiliates to do the same.”

Whereas current student vaccination rates are 99%. According to Emily Rockett, college legal counsel, as of August 17th, only 80% of Ithaca College staff and faculty were vaccinated. Both data points were confirmed at the August 31st All-College gathering.

Whereas “The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports in its latest [Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People](#) that infections in fully vaccinated people (breakthrough infections) happen in only a small proportion of people who are fully vaccinated, even with the Delta variant. Moreover, when these infections occur among vaccinated people, they tend to be mild, reinforcing that vaccines are an effective and critical tool for bringing the pandemic under control.” <https://www.osha.gov/coronavirus/safework>

Drawing attention to the [Cornell University “COVID-19 Response” webpage](#), which states that 95% of Cornell’s on campus population is vaccinated, including 99% of professorial faculty and 90% of other employees.

Whereas schools such as [Boston University](#), [Johns Hopkins University](#), [University of Rochester](#), [University of Connecticut](#), and others require faculty and staff to be vaccinated.

Recognizing that, as of August 23rd, the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccination is FDA approved.

Understanding that by not requiring employee vaccinations, all members of the Ithaca College community are put at risk.

Understanding that the college incurs unnecessary costs when employees must take paid sick time. This also puts strain on employees due to short staffing. Absent faculty and staff also incur a loss of learning for students. If more employees were vaccinated, these costs would be reduced.

Understanding there will still be medical and religious exemptions among employees.

Recognizing that mandating employee vaccination may require communicating with unions of which Ithaca College employees may be involved. However, the policy is in the best interest of the entire campus community.

It is resolved that Ithaca College makes it a requirement that employees be vaccinated.

Section 1. Ithaca College should continue to encourage and incentivize vaccinations using such tools as paid time off for vaccination recovery.

Section 2. The College should continue to require masking, regular testing, and social distancing for members of the community who have medical and religious exemptions for the vaccine.