

Dear Members of the Harvard Community,

With all adults in the United States now eligible for COVID-19 vaccine, we are encouraged to be hearing that many of you have been able to schedule your first dose. This is great news and we are eager to see this trend continue. As we have said before, a high vaccination rate at Harvard, particularly among students, will be critical to the University's plan for a return to full in-person learning, research and other activities in the fall.

For anyone with concerns about the COVID-19 vaccine, please remember that all COVID vaccines available in the United States are highly effective at preventing infection and transmission of the novel coronavirus. Public health monitoring of vaccine progress continues to show that they significantly lower your risk of infection, even if those around you have not been vaccinated. In Massachusetts, we have seen more virus variants like B.1.1.7 (the "U.K. variant"), which is more contagious; however, the vaccines have proved to work well against the common variants.

**Getting vaccinated protects you, as well as those around you.**

As many of you are still working to schedule your vaccine appointments, we do want to point to the following guidance:

- Visit the University's [vaccine webpage](#) for tips to help you plan your vaccine **no matter where you live**.
- **Continue to seek all sources for your vaccine.**
- Try to **get at least one dose of vaccine as early as possible**. A single dose at least starts to provide some protection, and the sooner that happens, the better.
- **Pre-register through the Massachusetts [state vaccine site](#)**, if you haven't already done so. And, for students, **check to see if you can pre-register in your home state** and sign up there as well. We have no idea how long the wait might be once you have signed up, so again, it is good to seek all options.
- If you plan to relocate following the end of the spring semester, **you should still try to get your first dose before you leave**.
- Some resources, like pharmacy scheduling sites, which you can access through [MA VaxFinder](#) or the [CDC's VaccineFinder](#), **allow you to schedule both dose appointments at the same time**, including **scheduling the second dose at a different location** (see "Plan for your vaccine" on the University's [vaccine webpage](#)). Different states might have different protocols for people who got their first dose elsewhere, so it is best to check the state where you plan to be, if you are leaving the campus area in a few weeks.
- It is **not dangerous to delay the second shot** (for Moderna or Pfizer). Based on everything we know about other vaccines, getting a second shot too soon

can result in reduced effectiveness, but getting the second dose late mostly just means that you delay the benefit that you get from it.

- Keep your vaccination card in a safe place, and make digital and/or paper copies.
- **Send a clear copy of your completed vaccination card to [mrecords@huhs.harvard.edu](mailto:mrecords@huhs.harvard.edu).** We keep this information secure and confidential. As we monitor progress toward full vaccination of the Harvard community, this information will inform our decisions related to summer and fall planning. If you received your vaccine through Harvard University Health Services (HUHS), you do not need to submit this information, since it is already recorded.

As we near the end of the semester, we know there is an increased desire to gather socially. However, we are not out of the woods yet. As I said last week, we are in a race between the virus and the vaccine. While we are pleased to see vaccination rates rising, we simply cannot let our guard down. While we await higher vaccination rates in our community, we **must [remain vigilant in our actions](#). Please avoid eating and drinking with anyone outside your household**, especially indoors, if you or any of your companions or family members are not fully vaccinated.

Thank you again for your commitment to the health and safety of our community over the course of this semester. Let's Keep Keeping Harvard Healthy!

Sincerely,

Giang T. Nguyen  
Executive Director  
Harvard University Health Services