

Dear Members of the Harvard Community,

As vaccine availability progresses across the country and in Massachusetts, I want to provide updates and address some questions that have arisen. I have great optimism for the future as we see vaccine supply increase, but we are not yet out of the woods. The vast majority of people are not yet vaccinated, and infections continue to spread. The daily new infection rate now is as high as it was in early November. Every new infection is an opportunity for more dangerous viral mutations to occur.

### **Harvard Vaccine Availability**

As previously shared, Harvard University Health Services (HUHS) is a state-approved vaccine distribution partner. Since December, we have submitted weekly vaccine requests to the State, but continue to receive limited supply. Following the [State's distribution plan](#), we are administering available vaccine to persons eligible in Phase 2, Group 2. We expect that most of our Harvard community will remain ineligible for vaccine until Phase 3, which the State announced today is scheduled to begin on April 19.

Here at Harvard, we are planning the logistics for broader distribution of the vaccine, including how we will alert, schedule and administer vaccine to larger portions of our community. We will continue to update you on our plans and the potential for you to receive vaccine through HUHS – both for those who will become eligible before Phase 3 and for our broader community when Phase 3 begins on April 19. In the meantime, please plan for your vaccination. Once you are eligible, we strongly encourage you to seek vaccine from all available sources, including state-run vaccination sites, your primary care physician, community-based sites, and pharmacies. Massachusetts now has a site where [you can pre-register for appointments at state-run sites](#).

### **Questions About Getting the Vaccine**

I urge everyone to get the vaccine once you are eligible. All three COVID vaccines that are available in the United States are safe and very effective at reducing your likelihood of severe illness from COVID-19. To return to “normalcy,” the vast majority of our community must be vaccinated. It is the best way to protect yourself, your friends and family, colleagues and others.

### **Let Us Know If You Are Vaccinated**

If you have received the vaccine, you can either upload a clear copy of your completed COVID vaccination card to the HUHS patient portal or email it to HUHS at [mrecords@huhs.harvard.edu](mailto:mrecords@huhs.harvard.edu). While vaccination is not required, sharing that you have been vaccinated with HUHS helps us to estimate the number of doses we will need as supplies increase. It will also help us understand the level of protection in our community, so we can make decisions about future policies and protocols.

### **Already Vaccinated, Remain Vigilant**

Recently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued guidance for fully vaccinated individuals. Full vaccination status is achieved 14 days after completing the vaccination series. The CDC outlined ways that fully vaccinated persons can interact with one another in their private homes. These guidelines do not apply to the workplace, public spaces, or travel. We are not lifting any restrictions for

vaccinated persons in the Harvard workplace yet – i.e. research labs, healthcare clinics, etc. – nor are we changing the prohibition for official University travel at this time. We will continue to monitor this policy as more of the population gets vaccinated.

Whether or not you are fully vaccinated, it is critical that you remain vigilant. The risk of transmission remains high, and that risk is heightened by the continued prevalence of new strains of the virus. The practices and protocols that have helped us limit the transmission of COVID-19 on campus are just as important in the weeks and months ahead. Wear masks properly, practice physical distancing, wash hands frequently, limit the number of people you come in contact with, use the [Crimson Clear](#) app any day that you will be on campus, and participate fully in the University COVID testing program that applies to you.

For more on vaccine, I encourage you to read the [Harvard Gazette's Q&A](#) with Dr. Paul Biddinger, who serves on the University Coronavirus Advisory Group, and myself.

### **Travel Guidance**

For personal travel out of state, the University is revising our policy to recognize that some folks may be fully vaccinated. After travel, fully vaccinated persons may return to campus activity with a single negative PCR test. Keep in mind that the CDC continues to discourage any travel.

For now, all University-related travel, both international and domestic, remains prohibited until further notice. This policy applies to all Harvard community members, even if you have been fully vaccinated. We also strongly discourage personal travel, both international and domestic. Under limited circumstances, eligible individuals may continue to [petition for Harvard-related travel](#).

We are closely monitoring CDC guidance, global incidence rates, and the feasibility of travel, and we will update the criteria to petition as conditions warrant. Our goal remains to enable critical research activity while keeping travel to a minimum to protect our community and the communities to which we travel.

Like all of you, I am eager for when we can gather freely, work together in-person, travel, and get back to normal. I believe that day is in sight as we continue to see greater availability of vaccine. However, it is important that we keep doing what we're doing to *Keep Harvard Healthy*. Your commitment to the health and wellbeing of yourself and every member of our community has helped us keep COVID-19 infections relatively low, and your friends and colleagues safe. Let's keep it up!

Sincerely,

Giang T. Nguyen  
Executive Director  
Harvard University Health Services

