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COVID-19 vaccine mandatory to attend Georgian College campuses

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Students and staff who will be attending programming at the Georgian College Orangeville campus this fall will be required to have a full COVID-19 vaccination.

Georgian College announced in a press release last Friday (Aug. 13) that they would be making the COVID-19 vaccine a mandatory requirement for all staff and students to access any of the college's campuses by Sept. 7. The college noted that the decision was made as they continue to work closely with local public health authorities.

?This announcement was after very careful consideration,? said Brenda Burman, manager of the Orangeville campus. ?There are two critical areas that we have been working with.?

The two factors the college has been focused on including the lower vaccination rates of the college's population demographic, mainly comprised of 18 to 29 year-olds, and variants of concern such as the Delta variant.

?Our focus of course, is ensuring the least amount of interruptions to academic programming,? said Burman.

Georgian College President, Dr. MaryLynn West-Moynes, in the press release on Friday said the health and safety of students and staff has driven the school's decision throughout the pandemic and that this decision on vaccines is no different.

?We know widespread vaccination is our best strategy to a safe and more rapid return to on-campus life and I'm committed to doing everything we can to make that return a reality for our students and employees,? said West-Moynes.

?As an academic institution, we also understand our role and responsibility for the greater good and our commitment to protecting the health and safety of the communities we are so fortunate to be a part of and cherish.?

Burman said that across Georgian College campuses about 35 per cent of students registered have an in-person requirement for the fall semester. In Orangeville this would be students in health, wellness, and science that have an in-person lab requirement.

At the time of print, while enrollment for the fall semester is still being finalized, approximately 60 to 70 students and 20 to 25 employees are expected to attend in-person at the Orangeville campus.

In order to work or study at any Georgian campus or affiliated facility, students and staff will be required to have a minimum of their first does of a two-dose Health Canada or World Health Organization (WHO) approved vaccine before attending on Sept. 7. A second dose or full vaccination, will be required by Oct. 18.

?Students need time to make a decision about attending school in the fall with this announcement,? said Burman.

Georgian College will have a process to grant accommodation to individuals who cannot be vaccinated on medical ground or other grounds recognized by the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The college said more details on their full vaccination policy, how it will apply to campus visitors and the exemptions process will be announced and made available on their website in the coming weeks.

For more information on required vaccination on campus, and for updates in the coming weeks, visit Georgian College's website at

www.georgiancollege.ca.