FAQs – WSCL COVID-19 Policy & Protocols

1. **In a nutshell, what are the new protocols that will be required as part of in person instruction at Western State?**

    First, students, staff and faculty (including adjuncts) must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 in order to enter the Western State campus. [See Policy & Protocols ¶ 3]

    Second, all individuals entering the campus must answer a set of COVID protocol questions each day. [See Policy & Protocols ¶ 7]

    Third, all individuals entering the campus must wear proper facial coverings, practice physical distancing, and observe other pandemic safety precautions. [See Policy & Protocols ¶ 9]

2. **When does this policy go into effect?**

    August 1, 2021. [See Policy & Protocols ¶ 1]

3. **What does "fully vaccinated" mean?**

    Fully vaccinated for purposes of this policy means having received two doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine or one dose of the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days prior to seeking access to the campus. [See Policy & Protocols ¶¶ 1, 4]

4. **Will WSCL require booster shots?**

    Not at this time, although booster shots are strongly recommended for all who are eligible to receive them. Should booster shots be required by WSCL, advanced notice of that requirement will be provided. [See Policy & Protocols ¶ 5]

5. **Can I apply for an exemption from the vaccination requirement for medical or religious reasons?**

    You may seek exemption from the vaccination requirement based on medical or religious reasons. [See Policy & Protocols ¶ 6]

    To apply for the exemption, you must fill out an online application for exemptions from the vaccination requirement that can be found here. To access this online application form, you must be logged in to your Western State email address or a Gmail address. Please note that exemptions based on health reasons require documentation of the health reason from your medical provider.

If you do not apply for and receive an exemption from the vaccination requirement you must be vaccinated in order to enter the campus.

6. **If I am exempt from the vaccination requirement are there other requirements I must meet to gain access to the campus?**

   Yes, if you have received an exemption from the vaccination requirement you must show proof of a negative COVID test taken at your expense within the last week. [See Policy & Protocols ¶ 6]

   All other COVID policy requirements apply, including answering the daily protocol questions, wearing masks and physical distancing apply. [See Policy & Protocols ¶¶ 7, 9]

7. **Can I attend classes online to avoid the vaccination or testing requirements?**

   No. There will be a very small number of classes offered online, but it will not be possible for a student to enroll in a fully online program of study. [See Policy & Protocols ¶ 17]

8. **What do I need to do to prove that I am fully vaccinated or that I have a negative COVID test?**

   All students, staff and faculty must download a smartphone app called CLEAR. Instructions for downloading and using the CLEAR app may be found here.

   Proof of vaccination will be accomplished by uploading a picture of your CDC vaccination card or a QR code from the State of California through the app, the authenticity of which will then be verified by CLEAR. [See Policy & Protocols ¶ 3]

   For individuals who receive an exemption from the vaccination requirement, a weekly negative COVID test is required in lieu of vaccination. If your COVID-19 test is taken through one of the testing entities listed here, you will be able to link the negative test results to the CLEAR app at the beginning of each week to satisfy the negative test requirement for the week. [See Policy & Protocols ¶ 6]

   Please remember when planning to take your COVID test that it can take several days for the test results to be available to you. So if you need to attend classes on Monday, you should take the test far enough in advance of Monday to make sure you will have test results by Monday.

9. **How will entering the campus each day work, will I have to fill out a paper form each day answering the health questions, and will there be long lines to gain entrance to the campus?**

   The CLEAR app will provide a quick and easy way to gain entrance to the campus. The first time you prepare to enter the campus each day you will open the CLEAR app, and after it verifies your identity through facial recognition it will ask you the three COVID protocol questions that all individuals entering the campus must answer.

Then, if you are fully vaccinated and that has been verified by CLEAR, the app will produce a green screen with your name and photo, which can be quickly shown to campus security as you enter the building.

For those who are exempt from the vaccination requirement, if you have received a negative COVID test through one of the testing entities that works with CLEAR (see list here) you will be able to link your negative test results to the CLEAR app, and that information, coupled with your daily answers to the COVID protocol questions, will give you green screen access to the campus for the week following that negative COVID test. You will need to upload a new negative test each week.

[See Policy & Protocols ¶ 7]

10. **Does it matter which entrance I use to access the buildings?**

The library building (#8) will have only one entrance. The front building (#9) will have two entrances, the main lobby entrance in front, and a side entrance. To facilitate quick access to the front building, students entering with the CLEAR app should all use the "side" entrance (signs will lead the way). Visitors who are entering the building without the CLEAR app will have a slightly longer entry process and will therefore be directed to the front entrance, so as not to delay students entering the building from the side entrance.

11. **What if I need to go from one campus building to the other, or leave the building and then wish to return?**

Once you have answered the COVID protocol questions, those answers are good for the next twelve hours. So, if you have already uploaded proof of vaccination or, for those who are exempt from the vaccination requirement, a negative COVID test within the week, your answers to the COVID protocol questions will give you a green screen that you can continue to use to reenter the campus or move from building to building, simply by displaying the green screen to campus security. [See Policy & Protocols ¶ 8]

If your twelve-hour window for your answers to the COVID protocol questions has expired, you need only answer the three questions again to regain the green screen needed to enter the campus.

12. **What if I didn't get tested at one of the entities on the CLEAR app list?**

If your negative COVID test did not come from one of the test entities on the CLEAR list, you will need to email a copy of your COVID test results to the Senior Assistant Dean of Student Services, Donna Espinoza (despinoza@wsulaw.edu). She will then put your name on a list for campus security so they know you have a negative test. You will also need to fill out a paper version of the COVID protocol questions.

13. **What if I don't get fully vaccinated until after the semester starts?**

You will not be treated as fully vaccinated until 14 days have elapsed after the last vaccine shot was administered (the second shot for Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna, or the first shot for Johnson & Johnson – see FAQ #3, above). Until you are fully vaccinated, you will need an exemption from the vaccination requirement and a negative COVID test must be produced each week (See FAQ #6, above).

14. **What rules will apply to visitors to the campus?**

Visitors to the campus should contact the department they wish to visit in advance of their visit to inquire about COVID protocols. At a minimum visitors will be required to undergo a temperature check and answer the COVID protocol questions, and adhere to masking and social distancing protocols. [See Policy & Protocols ¶ 15]

15. **What happens if I forget/lose my smartphone?**

You should notify Student Services immediately. Until you are able to retrieve/replace your smartphone, you will need to follow the requirements for visitors (see FAQ #14, above).

16. **Will I be identified to other students, staff or faculty as being vaccinated or exempt from vaccination?**

No. In compliance with law, all information concerning proof of vaccination or COVID test results will be maintained on secure servers not accessible to anyone at Western State. Should you apply for an exemption from vaccination, the information you provide in that application will be accessible only to the Senior Assistant Dean of Student Services. When you display the CLEAR app to campus security you will be revealing nothing more than that you have answered the COVID protocol questions in the negative, and either have provided proof of vaccination or a negative COVID test. [See Policy & Protocols ¶¶ 3, 6, 7]

17. **What if I test positive, have symptoms, or have close contact with someone with COVID?**

If you test positive for COVID-19, experience symptoms of COVID-19 or come into close contact (within six feet for at least fifteen minutes) with someone you believe has COVID-19, you should report this immediately on a confidential reporting form that may be accessed online here. Please note that to access this online reporting form you must be logged in to your Western State email address or a Gmail address.

You should immediately begin implementing quarantine requirements (for those who may have been exposed to other infected individuals) or isolation requirements (for those with COVID or COVID symptoms), following the CDC guidelines articulated here. [See Policy & Protocols ¶¶ 10, 11]

18. **How can I attend class if I am required to isolate or quarantine?**

A student who is required to isolate or quarantine due to a COVID-19 symptoms or diagnosis, or COVID exposure, should immediately notify Student Services. Arrangements will be made for the student to attend classes via Zoom for the duration of the mandated isolation or quarantine. [See Policy & Protocols ¶ 12]

19. **If I travel internationally over a break, what must I do to make sure I can return to campus on time?**

Students, staff, and faculty returning from international travel will be required to follow CDC guidelines. All individuals who return from international travel must obtain a COVID-19 test 3-5 days following return to the US. However, if the returning individual is fully vaccinated the individual will be able to access the campus without delay unless they develop symptoms or test positive. Individuals who are not fully vaccinated must quarantine before returning to campus. The initial quarantine period is 10 days. However, if the COVID-19 test taken 3-5 days after return to the US comes back negative, the individual can shorten the quarantine to 7 days after returning to the US. Any individuals returning from international travel who develop symptoms or test positive for COVID-19 must follow the CDC isolation policy CDC guidelines. [See Policy & Protocols ¶ 13]

20. **What happens to individuals who fail to comply with these policies?**

Violations of this policy by a student will subject the student to charges under the Honor Code. Violations of this policy by faculty or staff will subject the violator to appropriate administrative sanctions.

21. **Is there any possibility that the Western State COVID Policy & Protocol might change in the future?**

Western State reserves the right to make future changes in this policy including the addition of booster vaccine requirements or loosening or tightening of health and safety protocols. In addition, should there be a spike in COVID cases in OC or Southern California, we may return to fully online temporarily or for the remainder of the term.