



STILLMAN COLLEGE COVID-19 UPDATE: NEW VACCINATION POLICY ANNOUNCED

- **Beginning Oct. 10, 2021, students, faculty, and staff must show proof of vaccination or be listed on the vaccine database to gain entrance at the main gate of Stillman's campus.**
- **Free campus vaccination clinics to be held Sept. 14-15**
- **Accommodations will be available for students or staff who choose not to be vaccinated**

Sept. 1, 2021

Dear Stillman Campus Community,

Last year, the Stillman administration guided by the Public Health Task Force's recommendations put policies and processes in place that were very effective against the spread of COVID-19 on the campus. Our primary goal has always been to maintain the highest levels of safety for our students, faculty, and staff at the College.

In our planning for this Fall, we were hopeful that the worst was behind us, and some semblance of normal operations was in sight. However, the Delta variant of COVID-19 is driving infections and hospitalizations nationwide to levels that were not seen since February, before vaccines were available. The Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center reported Monday that the **daily number** of COVID-19 positive cases in Alabama has increased to a high of 3,433 and an average of **31 people are dying daily**, with an increasing number of children and young adults being hospitalized. Additionally, the DCH health system in Tuscaloosa reported Monday that 156 patients were in the hospital with COVID-19, and of that number 136 were unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated; and 34 of those patients are in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU).

According to the CDC, African Americans are 1.1 times greater to get infected, 2.8 times greater to be hospitalized, and two times greater to die from COVID-19 than White, non-Hispanic persons. **African Americans** have a COVID-19 **death rate of double** or more than that of White and Asian Americans. Race and ethnicity are risk markers for other underlying conditions that affect health, including socioeconomic status, access to health care, and exposure to the virus related to their work environment.

The first US clinical trial for a COVID-19 vaccine was in March 2020 through Kaiser Permanente in Seattle. More than 30,000 participants at 100 clinical research sites in the United States participated in the Moderna trial and 43,661 participated in the Pfizer trial: with 30% from racial & ethnic groups. By the end of November 2020, 1.5 million Americans tested positive, African Americans had the highest hospitalization rates, over 300,000 Americans had died, and almost 5,000 deaths were in Alabama. Because of the positive results from the clinical trials and the rising deaths from the virus, the FDA approved the vaccines for emergency use in December 2020.

Stillman takes its responsibility critically to ensure that our campus community is a safe place for people to live and learn. We cannot control what people do outside of our gates, but in order to ensure this level of security and comfort, we are implementing a new policy because of the surge in the Delta variant and the greater risks to African Americans: **Beginning Oct. 10, 2021, students, faculty, and staff must show proof of vaccination or be listed on the vaccine database to gain entrance at the main gate of Stillman's campus.**

To help our Stillman community reach this critical layer of health and safety, the Alabama Department of Public Health will be hosting a vaccine clinic on Sept. 14 and 15 in Birthright Alumni Hall. Each person who gets a vaccine receives a COVID-19 vaccination card. **The policy's start date of Oct. 10 will allow everyone up to 24 days to get their second shot.**

Vaccination is not a requirement for study or work at Stillman College. We will make accommodations for students and employees who choose not to be vaccinated. We are only restricting access to the campus because of the increasing rates of infection by the Delta variant in Tuscaloosa and Alabama, and we view this action as a way to protect all students and employees who live, learn, and work at the College from infection, hospitalization, and adverse outcomes of the COVID-19 virus.

Whatley Health will also provide free COVID-19 vaccines on campus. Free COVID-19 vaccinations are also available at CVS, Walgreens, and the health department. The vaccination and masking policies will remain in effect until the CDC reports that the COVID-19 pandemic has ended. Thank you for compliance to this policy that will secure the health and safety of everyone at Stillman College.

Sincerely,



Cynthia Warrick, PhD RPh
President

