



A Message from University of Kentucky

PRESIDENT ELI CAPILOUTO



Dear Campus Community,

Late yesterday, we met another important milestone in our efforts to make our community – and all those we serve – healthier and safer: We administered our 200,000th vaccine dose in the fight against COVID-19.

That's 200,000 injections of healing and hope. That's 200,000 shots that represent thousands of members of our university and health care communities who have volunteered and made this fight their focus for more than a year. That's 200,000 steps – some small, some large, all important – toward returning to more normal operations and the lives we long to share with loved ones, friends and families.

But this milestone also must remind us that there is still so much to do. That is why I write to you today regarding next steps and more information on what we have done thus far:

- Thousands of appointments for vaccines remain open at our clinic at Kroger Field, even as the state has recently expanded eligibility for shots to anyone age 16 or older.
- Getting scheduled for a vaccine is easy. Go to vaccine.ukhc.org to register. You will receive confirmation of your interest and an invitation to schedule your appointment.
- If you have questions or concerns, you can inquire at vaccine@uky.edu or call our customer service center at 859-218-0111 . At Kroger Field, we offer the Pfizer vaccine – a two-shot vaccine that requires a first shot and second booster shot roughly three to four weeks later.
- This week, we also established two on-campus vaccine sites that students will primarily utilize, although faculty and staff are welcome, too.
- At the Gatton Student Center and K-Lair, we are offering vaccinations, utilizing the one-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine. [Go to this link to schedule an appointment.](#) We will accept walk-ups for vaccines, but supplies each day are limited. [You can read more about this program here.](#)

- Whatever vaccine you want – whether Pfizer or Johnson & Johnson – is simply a matter of choice and preference. Both are safe. Both are highly effective in preventing the virus. Both have proven nearly 100 percent effective at preventing serious illness.

Vaccinations are our best defense against the virus. They represent, in an important sense, our best offense in our plan to return to as normal of operations as possible in fall 2021. Our campus has made incredible progress toward that end:

- More than 10,000 UK HealthCare team members – nearly 93 percent -- have been vaccinated. That process started in mid-December.
- Outside of health care, there are almost 19,000 faculty, staff and students working on our campus.
- Amongst that number, nearly 78 percent of faculty have been vaccinated.
- More than 80 percent of faculty have either been vaccinated or are in the process of being vaccinated, meaning they registered for a vaccine and should be in the process of being vaccinated at UK or elsewhere.
- More than 64 percent of staff have been vaccinated; 70 percent have been either vaccinated or are in the process of being vaccinated.
- Outside of a health care context, nearly 14,000 students have been vaccinated already, and another 3,000+ are in the process of being vaccinated.
- That represents well more than half of our student population of roughly 30,000. It is the result of the fact that so many of our students work in health care and research settings or in other employment in our campus community.
- As eligibility has expanded, and in accordance with state guidelines, we have offered vaccinations to more and more members of our community. It's these ongoing efforts-- and the desire of so many on our campus to receive a vaccine— that reinforce our belief that we don't need to require the COVID-19 vaccine. We will continue to monitor our progress and always do what is in the best interests of our community.
- We are also inviting more than 21,000 admitted students – students who have been offered enrollment this fall – and their families to register for a vaccination.
- I don't know of another campus that has taken this step, but the fact is this: every person who is vaccinated makes our community – and other communities in Kentucky and around the world – safer. It's that simple. We have the capacity, the partnership with the state and the commitment to expand our efforts to make it possible for even more people to receive vaccines. We have been given the opportunity, in partnership with our Commonwealth, to extend and enhance life in every corner of Kentucky and beyond our borders. We will take it.
- Many of these students – more than 5,000 – will enroll at UK this fall. Their vaccinations will make their homes and our campus safer, too.

We have an obligation to lead. We have an opportunity to serve. Both ideas are embedded in our mission as a land-grant institution. Over the last year, we have stepped up to meet every challenge, no matter how daunting and no matter the cost.

I am proud to be part of a community so committed to its people and to our responsibility to serve our state and world.

Thank you.

Eli Capilouto
President