



**BOARD OF REGENTS OF  
THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA**

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September 20, 2021

Dr. Cindy Hahamovitch  
University of Georgia  
Franklin College Faculty Senate

Via Email: cxhaha@gmail.com

Dear Dr. Hahamovitch,

Thank you for your recent communication regarding the COVID-19 protocols for the University System of Georgia (USG) and its institutions. I appreciate your concern and your willingness to engage with system office staff and the Board of Regents on these important issues. Before I address your specific requests, I want to thank you and all of the faculty and staff for your tremendous work over the last 18 months. We have never faced such complex and complicated challenges but our campuses have risen to the challenge to live our mission of educating our students. We must fulfill that mission, because it directly affects students' ability to attain their degree and improve their quality of life. Research has shown us that while what we have done over the past 18 months worked to some extent, our students have not performed as well as when they are in the classroom and able to engage with their faculty in person. It is for this reason the Board of Regents made it a priority that we return to the classroom.

Regarding vaccine mandates, Governor Kemp issued an Executive Order (EO) on May 25, 2021, that prohibits the use of a vaccine passport system for state entities. As you know, we are a state entity. The EO reads, in part:

*That no state agency, provider of state services, or state property shall implement a Vaccine Passport Program or otherwise require an individual to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination as a condition to enter the premises of or conduct business with a state agency, receive state services, enter upon state property, be employed by the State, or enjoy any other rights or privileges provided by the State.*  
[\(Link to full EO here\)](#)

We know the single most effective way to keep from getting and spreading the virus that causes COVID-19 is to get vaccinated, and the system has committed to making the vaccines as accessible as possible to everyone. A majority of institutions offer vaccine incentives, as does the system for employees enrolled in a USG healthcare plan. Paid administrative leave is also available to give employees time to get their shots, and as a thank you to those who are already vaccinated. This effort is critical, and I am asking for everyone's help as we focus on vaccinations to protect our communities.

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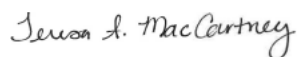
Regarding mask mandates, Georgia has no state mask mandate. As a system, we strongly encourage mask usage in campus facilities and urge those who want to wear masks to do so.

Finally, regarding local control, it is our commitment that the USG COVID-19 response is uniformly carried out system wide. We must have common expectations across our system. This common set of guidance allows for equity across institutions.

We continue to be in contact with the Commissioner of the Department of Public Health (DPH) and her staff. DPH and USG are working together with campuses to ensure access to testing, PPE and vaccines.

Thank you again for your work and for reaching out to me with your concerns.

Sincerely,



Teresa MacCartney  
Acting Chancellor, University System of Georgia

cc: Jere W. Morehead, President, University of Georgia