



February 17, 2022

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Public and Private Higher Education Institution Leaders  
**FROM:** Stephanie M. Rodriguez, Cabinet Secretary, New Mexico Higher Education Department  
**CC:** Dr. Patricia Trujillo, Deputy Secretary, New Mexico Higher Education Department  
Gerald Hoehne, Director, Capital Projects Division, New Mexico Higher Education Department  
**RE:** Updated Public Health Order

---

Since October of last year, the State of New Mexico has been operating under crisis standards of care. After operating under these standards for nearly four months and in monitoring the number of New Mexicans hospitalized, there has been a considerable decrease in hospitalizations by 37% since January 28, 2022. Therefore, the New Mexico Department of Health and Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham have updated the public health order that will take effect today, February 17, 2022.

Under the new public health order, the use of masks indoors is no longer a requirement. However, public and private higher education institutions and their governing bodies can make an independent decision on what COVID-safe practices will remain in place. If students, faculty, and staff elect to maintain COVID-safe practices on an individual basis, they must be permitted to do so without any penalty, discrimination, or harassment.

More information and a copy of the public health order will be forthcoming. The New Mexico Higher Education Department appreciates your ongoing support of the agency, as well as our state's public health orders and executive orders. If you have any questions, please contact the agency via email at [NMHED.COVID@state.nm.us](mailto:NMHED.COVID@state.nm.us).