

## A message from Vice President of Human Resources Bryan Garey

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To our valued Virginia Tech employees – faculty, staff, and students,

As the COVID-19 vaccine continues to be rolled out, we know that our community, like every other, has important questions. I wanted to take a moment to answer a few of the most common questions we are hearing.

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) is leading vaccine distribution across our state. For the Blacksburg campus and surrounding area, the New River Health District (NRHD) is managing the vaccine distribution, as are other local health districts where Virginia Tech has locations.

The NRHD is making progress on vaccinating the population. However, supplies and resources are limited, as they are in many parts of the country. While it can be frustrating to wait, we are urging patience as health authorities work to overcome challenges and get more vaccines into our area. We all want vaccines to be available as broadly and quickly as possible.

**Who is currently getting the vaccine?** Vaccines for those at the highest risk of exposure, group 1a, which includes health care personnel and residents of long-term care facilities, have largely been completed. In the New River Valley, the NRHD is now vaccinating the 1b group. VDH defines this group as frontline essential workers, those who are age 65 and up, and individuals 16 to 64 with underlying health conditions that put them at a higher risk of contracting the virus.

**How is the vaccine being administered?** Virginia Tech is working with the NRHD to register our 1b frontline employees for vaccines. We are also identifying 1b employees across Virginia and coordinating with those local health districts to get employees vaccinated.

If you fall into the 65 and up age group or are an individual 16 to 64 with an underlying health condition, **you should register for the vaccine.**

Those in the New River Valley can do that at [www.nrvroadtowellness.com](http://www.nrvroadtowellness.com). After registering, you will need to wait for a call from NRHD to schedule your vaccine appointment. In other parts of Virginia, visit your local health district website at <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/covid-19-vaccine/phase-by-health-district/> or call them to find out about the registration process in your area.

**When will everyone else get the vaccine?** The next group scheduled to receive a vaccine is 1c. VDH defines this group as all other essential workers, including faculty and staff in institutions of higher education.

After the 1b group is completed, all other Virginia Tech employees – which includes full-time faculty and staff – will be eligible. In addition, graduate and undergraduate students who work for the university in some capacity, will be eligible under 1c – unless specifically excluded by the VDH.

Right now, we don't know when NRHD – or other health districts – will be ready for the 1c group. As NRHD Director Dr. Noelle Bissell said in this recent VT News article at <https://vtnews.vt.edu/articles/2021/01/unirel-vaccinedemand.html>, it is expected to be a couple of months before the district can offer vaccines to the 1c group.

When it comes to our students, unless you qualify for priority groups 1b or 1c, you will be vaccinated as part of the general population. The timetable for getting vaccines to the general population is not known at this time, but information will be communicated once it is known.

We encourage everyone – employees and students alike – to stay up to date on the latest vaccine information in Virginia by visiting the VDH's vaccine response site at <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/covid-19-vaccine>. Check the Virginia Tech Ready site at <https://ready.vt.edu/> for university updates.

In the meantime, stay vigilant and remember:

- Avoid Close contact situations. Maintain distance from other people.
- Avoid Crowds. Being in a large crowd will increase the chance that you will be around someone infected with the virus and that the virus will spread to others.
- Avoid Closed, poorly ventilated spaces.
- Wear Masks.

Even after receiving a vaccine, we will all need to continue following these guidelines for the safety of

our community until restrictions can be lifted.

Thank you for your understanding, patience, and vigilance during this unprecedented time. We had a successful fall semester and spring semester is starting smoothly. Thanks to you and your commitment to everyone who is part of Virginia Tech.

Sincerely,  
Bryan Garey,  
Vice President of Human Resources

## 2020 W-2s available electronically

2020 electronic W-2 and/or 1042S forms are now available and can be accessed through Hokie SPA at [https://banweb.banner.vt.edu/ssb/prod/twbkwbis.P\\_GenMenu?name=pmenu.P\\_MainMnu](https://banweb.banner.vt.edu/ssb/prod/twbkwbis.P_GenMenu?name=pmenu.P_MainMnu). Only some individuals in a non-resident tax status for 2020 will receive a 1042S.

To access forms electronically, log into Hokie SPA and select Hokie Team > Tax Forms - W-2 Year End Earnings Statement; click Submit, select the year, and click Display.

When the electronic form is retrieved, users will need to acknowledge consent to electronic receipt, which means a paper form will not be mailed. The printed electronic form is an IRS acceptable version of the W-2 and 1042S forms. Paper forms will be mailed to the home address of record by Jan. 31 if a consent to electronic receipt is not received.

If you have questions, contact [vtw2@vt.edu](mailto:vtw2@vt.edu).

## Voluntary COVID-19 employee testing schedule for Spring 2021

Appointments for voluntary COVID-19 testing for faculty, staff, and wage employees will be available Monday through Friday starting Jan. 25 through May 7 during the Spring 2021 semester.

Employees must register for testing in advance using the following link: <https://vtnotify.students.vt.edu/>. The system shows test appointments two weeks in advance so if the test date you want to schedule is not available yet, check back two weeks prior to that date. The deadline to schedule is 11:59 p.m. the day prior to the test date.

In addition to weekday testing, Sunday walk-in testing is available to faculty, staff, and wage employees beginning Jan. 31 through May 2 from 9:30 a.m. – noon.

Employees who want to use walk-in testing must sign up through VTNotify at <https://vtnotify.students.vt.edu/> the day before or day of testing. Employees must sign up prior to arriving at the walk-in testing site. No paper forms will be accepted. During sign up, the user will need to choose a time on the walk-in date, but they may arrive for testing anytime between 9:30 a.m. and noon on that day. If an

employee has not registered in VTNotify yet, there is some demographic information they will need to fill out in the system before they can sign up for a test.

Employees should receive test results in 48 to 72 business hours of being tested. Both voluntary and walk-in testing will take place at Lane Stadium, Gate 1. Please note, voluntary and walk-in testing is for current university employees only; family members are not able to sign up.

As a reminder, if you have a fever or COVID-19 symptoms or believe you have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 (within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes, regardless of whether the person was wearing a mask or not) you should not sign up for a voluntary or walk-in testing. Instead, contact your healthcare provider, urgent care clinic, or local pharmacy for additional instructions about testing options. Read the campus notice at <https://vtnews.vt.edu/notices/hr-faculty-staff-testing-information.html> for more information. If you are sick, please stay home and contact your supervisor.

See below for commonly asked questions. If you have additional questions about voluntary employee testing, contact [employeeesting@vt.edu](mailto:employeeesting@vt.edu) or call the HR Service Center at 540-231-9331. Visit <https://vtnews.vt.edu/notices/hr-spring2021-testing.html> for FAQs.

## Employee Assistance Program available to support mental health

With the added concerns surrounding COVID-19 and the social and political unrest in the country, mental health services may be helpful. If there is a need for additional assistance, as part of Virginia Tech's health care benefit program, employees who are covered by the university's health insurance have access to the Employee Assistance Program at <https://www.hr.vt.edu/benefits/discounts/health-wellness/eap.html>.

Employees may reach out to the Employee Assistance Program by phone or online. For those employees who have COVA Care or COVA HDHP, please call 855-223-9277 or visit the Anthem EAP website at <https://www.anthem.com/employer/eap/employee/>. The company code is Commonwealth of Virginia.

For those employees with COVA HealthAware, please call 1-888-238-6232 or visit the COVA HealthAware website at <https://www.mylifevalues.com/login>. The username is COVA and the password is COVA.

Benefitted employees have access to four free visits with a counselor through the Employee Assistance Program. Teletherapy is also being provided.

There are other resources available for non-benefitted employees as well. For more information or for questions, contact Hokie Wellness at [hokiewellness@vt.edu](mailto:hokiewellness@vt.edu).