

UO releases deadlines for students, staff to submit vaccination status

Jordyn Brown

Register-Guard
USA TODAY NETWORK

All University of Oregon students must show proof of vaccination from COVID-19 by the first day of classes on Sept. 27, with employees and students in the residence halls having to submit it weeks earlier, under the university's new COVID-19-related requirement.

The UO will offer incentives for students and employees who submit their immunization records for COVID-19 before Sept. 1.

All seven of Oregon's public universities are requiring the vaccine for in-person activities this coming school year or an exemption request, which is allowed under state law.

"Our planning for fall will continue to be guided by science and best practices," UO Provost Patrick Phillips said in the July 27 announcement.

"It presumes that the majority of our community will be fully vaccinated this fall under our vaccination requirement, and we will maintain appropriate public health safety measures. As we look to coming back together in fall and we resume something closer to normal, we will continue to rely on our collective sense of purpose and care for our community."

Students who don't submit either

their vaccine status or an exemption request will have a hold put on their records, preventing them from registering for classes. UO employees who don't submit either will "held accountable for compliance as they would other university requirements, including possible disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment," according to UO.

The deadlines for UO students and staff to submit their vaccination status or request an exemption are:

- School of Law faculty, staff and students: Aug. 13.
- Residence hall students, upon move-in and no later than: Sept. 14.
- All employees outside of the School of Law: Sept. 17.
- All other students: Sept. 27.

Students and employees who request an exemption from the vaccine requirement will have to follow more safety protocols. For example, everybody living in congregate housing facilities (such as residence halls) who is not fully vaccinated will be required to test weekly for COVID-19.

Face masks are still required indoors for everyone, regardless of vaccination status. Face masks can be removed when individuals are in a room or cubicle alone, or in an area designated for eating.

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ments" also are subject to the vaccine requirement, but contractors and visitors are not required to report it.

People who submit this information before Sept. 1 will be entered to win \$50 prizes. The university also is working to encourage vaccination by joining the White House's challenge, along with

hundreds of other universities, to engage college communities to get vaccinated.

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Camp

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with disabilities after the fires of 2020 was a nearly 100-year-old building that couldn't be occupied, a couple pavilions, one house and piles of rubble.

Between the wildfire destruction and COVID-19, there were concerns the camp would never come back. But thanks to the efforts of the small staff, board, volunteers and donations from people and businesses throughout the West, a dozen people at a time get to enjoy summer camp again.

For Christensen, Upward Bound is more than a place to draw and play games like ring toss, particularly after a year when social activities were limited due to the pandemic.

"It means everything to me to see her be able to come out and do these things and see the people she enjoys and get her out of her normal, everyday routine," Christensen's stepfather, Jared Goodwin, said.

When Christensen was reunited with Gjesdal on a sunny July afternoon, the smile on her face told the story. They told jokes, colored and laughed as if two minutes passed since they last saw each other, not two years.

"Maybe they wouldn't open it this year," Christensen said she worried. "Now it's opening. They let everyone join and come."

Restricted opening for camp in 2020

The Christian-based camp on the south bank of the North Santiam River was founded in 1978 to provide recreation and education for people age 12 and older with disabilities.

It initially was based at a site along the Little North Fork until moving into the former Gates School in 2018 after four years of renovations to the campus.

The move to a location with permanent buildings allowed people with more significant disabilities to attend; there are concrete and asphalt paths



Ricky Sosa and Thomas Shultz play a game of Uno at Upward Bound Camp in Gates. BRIAN HAYES / STATESMAN JOURNAL

and more shelter, like the old gym that was straight out of a Works Progress Administration picture book.

But the move to the former schools was difficult for some campers "because at the old place people were coming there for 50 years," long-time counselor Jessica 'Glowworm' Butler said. "It was a nice change: new scenery, more things to do. It was more open for people in wheelchairs."

By 2019, the camp had grown to host up to 20 people at a time in the summer and held programs for people with disabilities at other times of the year, including dances in Salem.

Some of the former school classrooms were converted into bunkrooms for campers and counselors. The campus was lined heavily with trees, making shade plentiful. Few vehicles passed by and at times the only sounds were of the North Santiam River on the other side of Gates School Road and of people laughing.

Camper activities were limited only by the imagination of the staff members. Games like basketball and throwing water balloons let the campers escape their regular lives. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in 2020, Upward Bound came perilously close to being closed for the year. Camp director Diane Turnbull, however, was determined to give as many people as possible the opportunity to attend.

She consulted with the Oregon

Health Authority to create a strategy to have up to four campers a week. Each person was required to stay in separate spaces, wear masks and stay distanced. Each worked with one staff member the entire time.

But even with the precautions, some of the campers who had been coming for decades couldn't go because of the chances of contracting the coronavirus and passing it on. Ricky Sosa, from Salem, was among them.

"It was really hard," his sister, Alexia Sosa, said. "He had a hard time really kind of understanding what was the reason why he couldn't."

The last set of campers of the year left in the last week of August.

Fires wipe out much of the campus

A week later, like a lot of the Santiam Canyon, the Upward Bound campus sustained massive damage in the Labor Day fires.

The main school building, which dates to 1927, miraculously survived, though not without scarring such as blistered paint and melted metal fixtures. The pavilions were largely unscathed, and Turnbull's residence remains.

That's pretty much it.

Buildings of metal and wood melted to the ground. The skeletons of a row of Forest Service trailers took up most of the field by the road. Half-scorched trees perilously close to toppling over were everywhere. Puddles of glass dotted the site. The efforts of all those years of making the campus beautiful, like when the young people from AmeriCorps came in 2019 and painted buildings and built nature trails, were gone.

Most of that debris remained six months after the fires were extinguished.

At one point, it seemed all that was left of the camp was Turnbull's endless optimism.

Because of the debris and how long it took to remove, it was impossible to plan a camp this year until the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Federal Emergency Management Agency cleared it in May.

"We did work a little with (U.S. Sen.) Ron Wyden's office and (Oregon Rep.) Jami Cate's office to help advocate for us, and they did a great job," Turnbull said. "I was so grateful because we actually got ODOT out here and got the work going. We didn't have much time."

Or money. The camp needed money to purchase nearly everything all over again.

Temporary power has been connected to the original school building, but it is only useable for storage. The building needed extensive renovations before the fires, and the fire damage didn't help it.

Upward Bound received a series of grants from groups including YMCA and Oregon Community Foundation to purchase items like 20 white tents and furniture for the campers and counselors and to rent portable bathrooms and showers. The Lefave family from Newberg donated a manufactured home that serves as the kitchen and offices for the camp.

All of that help provided what the camp needed to be able to host people again.

Then more help came.

Kuenzi Turf & Nursery and JB Instant Lawn, both of Silverton, donated about 10,000 square feet of grass. Groups of

young people from Silverton and Ohio helped install it to give the area some green space among all the burned-out tree stumps and shrubbery. It's been named Heavenly Meadow.

And groups came forward to build Mary D's Walking Path – named for a longtime camper – around the new meadow and through the campus.

It feels like a summer camp again.

There are still some trees, but most are gone and the shade along with it. Stacks of wood dot the campus. A fire pit, an especially safe one, is in the center of the meadow.

The campers play games like tic-tac-toe and bowl in the pavilions in the summer heat.

The white tents are circled in the center of the campus, dotting the area like the center of a target. They are now the focal point.

"People just show up with energy and time and ideas in many cases, some things that I never thought of. Where the tents are going to go? How do we make sure that people have showers?" Turnbull said. "Just all kinds of stuff."

A permanent solution

While the tents and other donations saved camp this summer, they aren't a permanent solution. Upward Bound needs occupiable buildings to be viable in the long term.

Fletemeyer & Lee Associates, an architecture firm from Colorado, is gifting Upward Bound with a new master plan.

"It is a bit of a blank canvas, which is great," Beckie Mason said while dropping off her daughter, Rebecca.

Turnbull said the camp has been surveying current and former campers and their families to find out what features they would like to see.

Ideas include an archery range, bunkhouses that look more like a camp than a school from the 1970s, and a ramp to the North Santiam River so those using wheelchairs can get to the water.

And almost all of those suggestions include a pool.

"Now it's just a matter of putting all those pieces together and writing a couple of narratives and they start looking at our information and what it is our campers are saying they want, what the community is interested in having, all of that kind of stuff, and what are the regulations around here," Turnbull said.

The camp had insurance but is receiving assistance with fundraising including from Camp Taloli, a camp for deaf children outside Stayton, which held a benefit concert for Upward Bound.

Finding the joy again

For days, Amy Zybura kept telling her mother, Rebecca Ede, about how much she was looking forward to seeing old friends, meeting new friends and eating S'mores when she got to camp.

Even without many modern amenities and after all the destruction of the past year, reuniting with friends in Gates was the highlight of her year.

"Camp is something that we've done with her since she was 11 years old; she's 34. She loves camp. That's her summer," Ede said. "If she can get to camp in the summer, that just fills her with such joy."

Bill Poehler covers Marion County for the Statesman Journal. Contact him at bpoehler@statesmanjournal.com or [Twitter.com/bpoehler](https://twitter.com/bpoehler).



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