



Promoting Health & Preventing Disease
Elko | Las Vegas | Pahrump | Reno

August 19, 2021

Jon Pennell, DVM
Chair, Nevada State Board of Health

RE: Immunization regulations

Dear Chair Pennell and Board Members,

This letter is in support of the **Adoption of Proposed Emergency Statement and Emergency Regulation Amendment of Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 441A.755, relating to university, community college and state college students providing proof of immunity to certain communicable diseases, including COVID-19.**

Given the devastating and lasting impacts of the pandemic, it is imperative to reduce the burden of COVID-19 and other vaccine-preventable diseases on Nevada's public health and healthcare system. High immunization rates also help protect our most vulnerable Nevadans, including young children, the elderly, the immunocompromised, and the medically frail; and students can learn in the safest environment possible. Unfortunately, COVID-19 vaccination rates have not yet reached this level in Nevada.

More than 700 campuses across the U.S. have announced some type of COVID-19 vaccine requirements, and we applaud Nevada for this proposed emergency regulation. We can look to history and legal precedent when in 1905 the Supreme Court noted in *Jacobson v. Massachusetts* "upon the principle of self-defense, of paramount necessity, a community has the right to protect itself against an epidemic of disease which threatens the safety of its members."

Getting vaccinated offers a layer of protection against COVID-19 that also protects family, friends, and community; and ultimately, saves lives. All COVID-19 vaccines available in the United States are safe and effective and stopping this pandemic requires using all the tools we have available.

Immunize Nevada continues to provide information, resources, and access to vaccines across the state – and most importantly, meet Nevadans where they are - so everyone that's eligible can roll up their sleeves and get vaccinated.

Thank you for your service and your continued efforts to protect Nevadans and our communities, while ensuring a healthy future for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heidi Parker", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Heidi Parker, MA

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