

COVID-19 Plans

Spring Semester, 2022

INTRODUCTION

Blackburn College recognizes that an important aspect of a Blackburn education is the personal, student-centered approach to teaching, learning, and the Work Program. The following plan is designed to maximize the Blackburn experience while simultaneously keeping students, faculty, and staff safe by observing the [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#), [Illinois Department of Public Health \(IDOH\)](#), [Macoupin County Public Health Department \(MCPHD\)](#), NCAA, and related guidelines as fully as we are able. In service to our Blackburn community and region, Blackburn calls upon students and faculty to adhere to these safe practices to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 across campus and our community. To remain in a face-to-face learning environment, we must remain healthy. Thus, it is in everyone's interest to follow Blackburn's policies and to respectfully request others to also do so.

Safety standards can be changed as new information and data is available. The campus community will be informed of any changes as they happen, new institutional guidance will be issued with changes. The College will regularly review and update its protocols based upon current requirements, recommendations and information. For the most updated guidance please visit blackburn.edu/coronavirus. All employees, students, and visitors to campus are required to comply with the protocols in effect while they are present on campus. **Individuals who fail or refuse to do so may be directed to leave and may be barred from campus.**

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COVID VACCINATION APPROACH

Vaccines for COVID-19 are required for faculty, staff, or students for the Spring Semester in 2022. Exemptions may be granted through official requests submitted to the institution.

REPORT AN ILLNESS REQUIREMENT

Any member of the Blackburn community (students and employees) must use the “Report an Illness” link below if any of the following apply:

- You are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms (i.e., fever of 100.4°F or higher; cough; sore throat; shortness of breath; difficulty breathing; loss of taste and/or smell).
- You have tested positive for COVID-19.
- You have been exposed to a person who has tested positive for COVID-19

The information you submit will automatically be forwarded to our COVID-19 response team who will then reach out to you.

If you are exhibiting any of the COVID-19 symptoms listed above, please stay home or in your dorm room until you are contacted by a Blackburn staff member. In addition, if you live on campus, please notify your RA.

Fully vaccinated individuals who are exposed to a positive and not experiencing symptoms are recommended to get a test done 3-5 days after exposure, but there would be no need to quarantine.

The “Report an Illness” link is found at: <https://blackburn.edu/illness/>

MASK POLICY

The following message was sent to the Blackburn community on February 28, 2022:

Last Friday, February 25, 2022, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released new guidelines and a new COVID-19 Community Levels tool to help communities decide what prevention steps to take based on the latest data. (The community level for Macoupin County, as of 2.24.22 is LOW.)

Governor Pritzker also released a statement on Friday to end the Illinois indoor masking requirements.

Based on these new guidelines, effective immediately, Blackburn will no longer require masking on campus, with the following exceptions:

- *Any Blackburn faculty or staff member may require students or co-workers to wear masks while in their classroom/lab, or personal office space. (Please check with your instructor or work supervisor for any specific details.)*
- *People with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask.*

Please note that we will continue to monitor community level conditions and status changes (e.g., low to high status) could lead us to require masks indoors in the future.

RETURNING TO CAMPUS PLAN

Testing Requirement Prior to Return:

- Everyone is asked to secure a negative test BEFORE returning to campus -- i.e., five days or less prior to returning.
- Results should be sent to COVID-Results@Blackburn.edu
- Reminder - If your test is POSITIVE, you should stay at home and fill out the [Report an Illness form](#).
- We recognize it may be difficult in certain areas to get tested. We are working to acquire testing on campus for those unable to test in advance.

Spring 2022 Move-in Day:

- Housing check-ins will be by appointment to control the amount of people coming in at one time. Students will be emailed to sign-up for a specific block of time. If you have not received this email, you can sign up at <https://calendly.com/blackburncollege-studentlife>. Please contact sarah.soltes@blackburn.edu with any questions.
- If you, anyone in your household, or anyone with whom you will be traveling to campus are sick or experiencing symptoms, stay home and let us know. We will arrange an alternative time for you to move in later.
- Two visitors can help a student move into their room at one time. Visitors and students must follow our campus safety guidelines which includes (1) stay home if anyone has a temperature, is sick or may have been exposed to someone that is sick, (2) wear a facemask while on campus and while inside the residence hallways, (3) and socially distance yourselves as much as possible. Move-in Visitors need to leave campus after you are moved in and have completed any business at the college that day.

ACADEMICS

- In-person approach to learning:
 - There will be no campus-wide remote option offered to Blackburn College students. Remote learning will be available to those in quarantine or isolation. There may be rare, exceptional circumstances in which a student might be allowed to learn remotely for a longer period, but such circumstances would be highly unusual and would require formal accommodation.
- Classroom policies:
 - Classrooms will be rearranged to accommodate socially-distant 6' spacing between student desks/seating and the instructor. Science labs will be closer, but masked 100%.
 - Some courses which involve known “super-spreading” activities such as singing, acting, or dancing will have additional spacing and personal protective requirements. *Please see Appendix A for information on singing protocols prepared by Dr. Joseph Welch and Appendix B for information on theater prepared by Prof. Laura Matthews.*
 - Attendance data is essential for contact tracing. Therefore, instructors should develop seating charts and take attendance daily.

MANDATORY SURVEILLANCE TESTING FOR UNVACCINATED FACULTY, STAFF, AND STUDENTS

Regular and mandatory surveillance testing for unvaccinated faculty, staff, and students will be performed on a weekly basis. Failure to participate as scheduled will be subject to disciplinary action.

CONTACT TRACING

MCPHD will provide contact tracing for all positive cases reported. Community members deemed to have been exposed through the contact tracing process will be required to quarantine in accordance with CDC and MCPHD guidelines. Community members can return to normal campus activities once released from quarantine.

QUARANTINE & ISOLATION

- Students who test positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate for the number of days determined by public health guidance, or longer depending on symptom severity, and students who have not submitted documentation proving full vaccination who have been exposed to infected individuals must quarantine, typically for ten days.
- Isolation:
 - Students required to isolate will be remote learners, and should participate in classes as they are able. They may return to campus when released from isolation. Students in isolation will be provided academic accommodations as requested and necessary. Students who are physically unable to complete coursework online will be extended flexible deadlines by instructors. The college's policies on incomplete grades will remain in effect.
 - Students will isolate in one of two locations:
 - Students will need to go home to isolate, when possible.
 - If not possible to go home, isolation rooms are reserved in Graham Hall.
- Quarantine:
 - Students in quarantine will be remote learners, and may return to campus when released from quarantine.
 - Students will quarantine in one of two locations:
 - Students will need to go home to quarantine, when possible.
 - If not possible to go home, quarantine rooms are reserved in Graham Hall.
- Students in isolation or quarantine are not permitted to leave their room, except to go to the bathroom and for approved outside time, until released for isolation or quarantine from the MCPHD.
- Meals will be delivered to students in isolation and quarantine on campus.
- MCPHD and Blackburn College staff will contact students in isolation and quarantine at least daily.
- In order to return to normal campus activity, students in isolation or quarantine must be approved by MCPHD.

PHYSICAL PLANT

Cleaning and Disinfection Practices

Blackburn College will implement enhanced cleaning and sanitation practices; however, it is the responsibility of all members of the campus community to be diligent in the cleaning and sanitation of surfaces, including their own hands and personal items, to prevent spread of the Covid-19 virus. The College encourages all faculty, staff, and students to clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces (door handles, counters, shared workstations, telephones, handrails, etc.) prior to individual use. The Campus Services department will provide disinfecting spray bottles for individuals to clean surfaces in classrooms and public spaces regularly. Disinfectant spray bottles will be strategically placed around campus to fight and slow the spread of the virus. Hand sanitizer stations will be strategically placed in high traffic areas such as in the hallways and lobbies of each building. Disinfectant wipes will also be made readily available in strategic locations across campus, such as classrooms, restrooms, and public spaces across campus.

Additionally, the Campus Services department will provide enhanced cleaning of bathrooms, common areas, and high-touch surfaces around campus with disinfectant spray. Our staff will proactively use fogging sanitation practices for deep cleaning of high traffic public use areas, such as restrooms and classrooms. Other areas will be fogged on a schedule set forth by Campus Services, and by request from campus community members. The College is working with contracted cleaning companies to help with large space disinfection on an as-needed basis. This will be a community effort to mitigate the spread of the virus.

Physical Plant will stock PPE/disinfectant supplies, and will have PPE supplies readily available for our community members' use in all buildings. Requests can be made to the Physical Plant through the SchoolDude system for additional supplies as needed. The following supplies are available: spray disinfectant, disinfectant wipes, hand sanitizer, and masks

Maintenance and Repair Requests

In response to COVID19, Blackburn College Physical Plant is implementing the following guidelines for response to necessary maintenance and repair work across campus. Physical Plant department Supervisors will review all work requests and determine the priority level of the request, to determine if the work is necessary, or can be deferred for a period of time. This is being implemented as a protective measure for our campus community.

Physical Plant requires all work requests to be submitted through SchoolDude. SchoolDude accounts can be created by each campus community member. Please contact Gena Ober if an account needs to be set up at 217.854.5503 or via email, gena.ober@blackburn.edu

Physical Plant will follow strict guidelines regarding building entry with all employees. This includes public spaces, classrooms, resident rooms, and offices.

- Appropriate PPE is required at all times
- Appointments will be made when possible with the work order requester
- If possible, the space where the work is being done needs to be vacant of the campus community member requesting the work while the work is being done
- Physical Plant employees will strive to only be in the area where the work is being done
- Disinfectant spray and wipes will be used on contact areas as the employees leave a space
- Physical Plant will strive to have a maximum of 2 employees working in a resident room or office at the same time (1 employee where possible; Student workers are required to have 2 workers present at a time in personal spaces)

Motor Pool

- Requests for vehicles will continue to be made via the Motor Pool Request Form
- Windows should be kept open if possible. Campus Services will strive to disinfect motor pool vehicles daily when they are being used; vehicle users should disinfect their personal space upon boarding and exiting
- The motor pool will have one minivan available for COVID-related purposes

Elevator Capacity: Elevators in Hudson and Rahme are restricted to 2 occupants at a time

HVAC Filters

MERV 13-rated filters have been installed where possible. Fresh air/make up air and system run times have been increased as much as possible.

Recycling Bins

Recycling will be temporarily suspended across campus. Recycling bins in buildings are removed and cardboard huts will be closed.

PPE Supplies

Supplies will be strategically placed in buildings across campus for campus community use. Staff and Faculty can request supplies for their offices through SchoolDude as needed. Available supplies are wipes, spray disinfectant, disposable towels, hand sanitizer, and masks. Students will be given disinfectant spray and disposable towels for use in their residence hall rooms.

Signage

Signage has been posted across campus in all buildings regarding COVID policies.

PROCEDURES FOR FACULTY/STAFF VIOLATIONS OF BLACKBURN COVID RULES

All reports of faculty/staff violations of COVID rules will first go to HR. In the event that such a report is made the following steps will be taken:

- HR will convey the information to the appropriate Division Chair and the Provost (in the case of faculty) or the appropriate Cabinet Member (in the case of staff).

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENT VIOLATIONS OF BLACKBURN COVID RULES

As outlined in the Student Handbook (“B-book”), all students are subject to disciplinary action when found responsible for violations of Blackburn policies as outlined in the B-book. Blackburn’s COVID rules are covered by multiple sections of the B-book, including but not limited to the following:

- Failure to comply with reasonable requests of College officials acting in the performance of their duties...
- Participating in or promoting the disruption or obstruction of teaching . . . or other normal operations of the College . . .
- Conduct which causes a health and/or safety risk;
- Any action . . . that threatens the safety or academic environment of the campus.

Allegations of student violations should be reported to Al Sturgeon, dean of students, for adjudication according to B-Book policy. Based on the specific allegation, allegations will proceed as either Infractions; First or Minor Offenses; or Multiple or Major Offenses.

ATHLETICS

Fans will be allowed for spring sports. More guidance will follow regarding social distancing as well as for winter and spring sports.

Please see Appendix C for NCAA guidance or consult Interim Athletic Director, Rob Steinkuehler, for more information.

HOUSING & RESIDENTIAL LIVING GUIDELINES

- General Policies
 - Housing is limited this year due to preparing spaces on campus for isolation and quarantine. Graham Hall will be reserved to serve this purpose.
 - Due to the nature of the pandemic, existing housing assignments may be changed as needed throughout the semester.
- Shared Spaces (i.e., laundry rooms; kitchens; bathrooms; parlors)
 - In shared spaces, furniture will be positioned to allow for social distancing; the numbers of residents allowed at one time will be limited; and signage will be posted communicating healthy practices.
 - Some bathroom sinks may be disabled to encourage social distancing.
 - The kitchens will be open. Only one person can use each kitchen at a time. Residents must not share dishes, utensils, or cookware. Kitchens must be wiped down and disinfected between use.

- Residence Hall Bedrooms
 - Bottles of sanitizer and paper towels will be available from your Resident Director.
 - There will be a four-person limit in residence hall rooms (all must be wearing masks).
- Staff Protective Measures
 - Staff members will use virtual means to communicate with residents to limit exposure; however, in-person room checks will occur on a limited basis.
- Residential Life Programming
 - Regular in-person programming will occur to provide important opportunities for relationships and community; however, alternative virtual programming will be provided as well so that all residents may participate in the residential community.
- Isolation and Quarantine
 - Isolation rooms are for students that have tested positive for COVID19. Quarantine rooms are for students that have been exposed to someone that has tested positive but they themselves have not tested positive. If you are not able to go home, you must stay in a designated room on campus until released from Macoupin County Public Health (MCPHD). This means you cannot leave your room, except to use restroom facilities, while you are in quarantine or isolation for 10-14 days. Meals will be brought to you. You will attend your classes remotely during this time. Students will be given the option to have supervised time outside of the assigned building with a professional staff member.

WORK PROGRAM

- Students who are enrolled full time for the spring semester will be eligible to participate in the Work Program. The following guidelines are set forth for participation in the program:
- Enrolled full time (at least 12 credit hours)
- 160 tuition hours for the spring semester, the tuition credit is \$2500 per semester
- Failure to complete 160 hours before close of business on December 18, 2021 will result in the remaining hours being charged to the student's account.
- As employees of the college, any student working on campus will be expected to strictly adhere to the community safety standards established by the college. For purposes of the Work Program, a student will be given a verbal warning with the first case of non-compliance, and written warnings will be issued with each subsequent violation. Upon the THIRD written warning for community safety violations, a disciplinary conversation will occur with the dean of students and dean of work.
- Written warnings for non-compliance of safety standards will count toward the standard work warning violation policy outlined in the B-Book.
- Departmental-specific safety standards will be in the department guidelines and reminders will be posted around the clock-in stations and shop or work areas.
- Entry to the Work Office for the spring semester will require that face masks are worn upon entry and throughout all meetings (this will be revisited as campus policy allows). Members of scheduled meetings are expected to wipe down the office space at the conclusion of the meeting.

CAMPUS EVENTS

- At present, only events hosted with Blackburn faculty and staff supervision for Blackburn College purposes are allowed on campus.
- When considering hosting a campus event, consider whether it might be successful in a virtual format.
- In addition, serving food at indoor events is discouraged. However, if food is a necessary part of the indoors event, enhanced monitoring and enforcement of masking and distancing protocols is critical.
- All campus events must be approved by the appropriate sponsoring cabinet member who will confirm that Blackburn health protocols will be monitored and enforced throughout the event by a professional staff or faculty member.
- Follow regular procedures to reserve space by turning in an event registration form to Auxiliary Services located in the Bookstore or email it to Bookstore@blackburn.edu. The Event Registration form can be found on the shared drive. You can contact x5577 for any help. Please remember that all event requests must be approved by a sponsoring cabinet member.
- While Campus Services will be providing enhanced cleaning and disinfection across campus, it is possible that there will be two events occurring in the same space, without time in between for Campus Services to clean the space. Therefore, the organizers and participants of the event are responsible for cleaning and disinfecting their immediate space prior to use.

OFF-CAMPUS EVENTS

All off-campus events hosted by Blackburn College must be approved by the appropriate sponsoring cabinet member who will confirm that Blackburn health protocols will be monitored and enforced

throughout the event by a professional staff or faculty member. If the health protocols will compromise the purpose of the event, the event should not be approved.

DINING SERVICES

- Seating in DING will be limited to ensure social distancing.
- Self-service will be allowed.
- Students will be given a green to-go container in case they do not wish to eat in DING. Students will need to return the container after each use, and a new one will be given to them each time.
- Snack Bar will offer mobile ordering on the Fresh Ideas app in addition to ordering in person.
- Eating will be allowed in the DCC great room to provide more opportunities for social distancing. All who eat in DCC are asked to bus their own tables and maintain social distancing.

BUSINESS TRAVEL

Business travel must be approved by the immediate supervisor, who will take into consideration CDC guidelines and the employee's vaccination status. Employees who are traveling should follow CDC guidelines.

MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH GUIDANCE FROM COUNSELING SERVICES

- Get the vaccine. If you are unvaccinated, educate yourself with respected sources for scientific information (CDC, NIH, State and County Health Department, Examine.com, PubMed) and limit your access to popular media sources that may be biased or politicized.
- Mute and unfollow the things that act as triggers for you.
- Stay connected (even if at a distance) to the people and things important to you.
- Aggressively address your physical and mental health: flatten the curve, exercise, eat right, take your medications, and make good use of self-help and professional resources.
- Counseling is available on campus, in-person or virtually.

FEDERAL FUNDING INFORMATION

Information and reports related to federal funding provided to Blackburn College in response to COVID-19 are available on the Blackburn website:

- The CARES Act & Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)
- The CRRSA Act & Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF II)
- The ARP & Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF III)

OFF-CAMPUS VISITOR POLICY

Prospective Student Visit Plan

- Prospective students may be accompanied on a campus visit by up to three family members.
- Tours will be by appointment only at 10:00 and 2:00 and will consist of no more than three families per tour group. Appointments/Schedule: Limited to admissions staff member interview, tour, meeting with work office representative, and meeting with coach if applicable.
- Students will sign up through our website via the online visit form. All visit parameters will be explained on the website.
- Students and family members will be asked not to come to campus with any illness or symptoms of any illness. The students will be informed that they and their family member's temperatures will be taken upon arrival at Jaenke Alumni Center. If a member of the visiting party has a temperature of 100.4 or higher, then the visit will not be permitted to happen and the family will be asked to leave and reschedule for another day and time.
- We will not offer any meals to visitors at this time.

Other Visitors to Campus

- No visitors are allowed on campus except for approved campus activities and invited small groups, which must be approved by a member of the Cabinet.
- Visitors must follow all Blackburn safety policies; those who do not will be removed from campus.

CONTACTS

- For medical and physical health questions and concerns, contact Gary Ross, MCPHD campus nurse, at gary.ross@blackburn.edu
- For mental health concerns, contact Tim Morenz, director of counseling services, at tim.morenz@blackburn.edu
- For academic concerns, contact the professor/instructor directly or a faculty member serving on the task force.
- For general questions or concerns, contact Al Sturgeon, chair of the COVID task force, at al.sturgeon@blackburn.edu
- For comprehensive written information from Blackburn College concerning COVID-19, go to www.blackburn.edu/coronavirus

BLACKBURN COVID TASK FORCE (as of January 2021)

- Dr. Joseph Welch (Faculty, Humanities)
- Dr. Mark Biermann (President)
- Dr. James Bray (Faculty, Natural Sciences)
- Brianna Milch (Student)
- Dr. Pamela Danker (Faculty, Social Sciences)
- Dr. Lauren Dodge (Vice President of Institutional Advancement)
- Tod Dowdy (Director of Safety)
- Sam Harding (Director of Physical Plant)
- Dr. Steven Lambert (Vice President of Inclusive Enrollment)
- Dr. Karla McCain (Provost)
- Jody Sturgeon (Dean of Work)
- Brandy Gray (Student, General Manager)
- Shawna Poe (Executive Assistant to the President & Board of Trustees)
- Gary Ross, RN (MCPHD)
- Rob Steinkuehler (Interim Athletic Director)
- Al Sturgeon (Vice President for Diverse & Equitable Student Life), Chair
- Margaret Lawler (Executive Director of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion; Chief Diversity Officer; Title IX Coordinator)

Effective January 2022

APPENDIX A: SINGING PROTOCOLS

Blackburn College
Department of Music and Theater
Covid-19 Guidance for Singing

Decisions are guided by information from the CDC, National Association of Teachers of Singing, and American Choral Directors Association. In addition to mitigation steps the Department of Music and Theater is taking, the following will make for a safer singing and music-making environment:

	During Low Levels of Transmission	During Moderate to High Levels of Transmission
Masks	Yes for all unvaccinated persons.	Yes for all persons.
Distancing	Minimum of six feet for unvaccinated persons.	Minimum of six feet for all persons.
Location	Recommended 200 square feet or more for any singing with two more people in the room.	As large of space as possible.

Ensembles and Events Where Multiple Persons Will Be Singing:

Everyone in the choir will remain masked and distanced at all times until the ensemble is 85% vaccinated. This standard will be followed by any group or event where multiple singers perform together or in succession. In times of low levels of transmission, after 85% are vaccinated, vaccinated students will not be required to wear masks.

Audiences at MUTH events must wear a mask.

The amount of time singing happens in a space should be limited to no more than an hour.

After singing has happened in a space, the room should be left empty for an hour.

At all times:

Outdoors remains the safest location for singing.

Open windows to bring in more outside air when possible.

Distancing can reduce exposure risks from directly expelled particles.

Any event involving singing is welcome and encouraged to discuss safety protocols with the MUTH faculty.

These guidelines will continue to be reevaluated and changed as appropriate.

APPENDIX B: THEATRE PROTOCOLS

Blackburn College
Department of Music and Theatre
Covid-19 Guidance for Theatre Productions

Decisions are guided by information from the CDC, and Actor's Equity Association. These guidelines are for plays not musicals. In addition to mitigation steps the Department of Music and Theatre is taking, the following will make for a safer performance environment:

	During Low Levels of Transmission	During Moderate to High Levels of Transmission
Masks	Yes for all unvaccinated persons.	Yes for all persons.
Distancing	Minimum of six feet for unvaccinated persons.	Minimum of six feet for all persons.

Rehearsal & Performance:

Everyone in the production will remain masked and distanced at all times until the ensemble is 85% vaccinated. In times of low levels of transmission, after 85%, vaccinated students will not be required to wear masks.

All props and surfaces will be cleaned and sanitized regularly.

During performances, if the cast and crew are 85% vaccinated (in times of low levels of transmission), the vaccinated cast members will be able to perform unmasked. The crew will remain masked backstage during the performance.

Audiences at MUTH events must wear a mask.

All props and surfaces will be cleaned and sanitized regularly.

No consumable food onstage.

All lavalier microphones will be assigned to individual cast members. The cast will place their own microphones.

At all times:

Open doors and windows to bring in more outside air when possible.
Distancing can reduce exposure risks from directly expelled particles.

These guidelines will continue to be reevaluated and changed as appropriate.



APPENDIX C: NCAA GUIDANCE FOR ATHLETICS

Resocialization of Collegiate Sport: 2021 Fall Training and Competition

Original release: August 4, 2021

This document serves as a supplement to [Resocialization of Collegiate Sport: 2021 Summer Activities](#), and addresses broad considerations that differentiate COVID-19 management in unvaccinated versus fully vaccinated Tier 1 individuals. As previously defined, Tier 1 individuals are those with the highest exposure (e.g., student-athletes, coaches, athletic trainers, physical therapists, medical staff, equipment staff and officials).

This document is the eighth NCAA publication regarding resocialization of collegiate sport:

1. [Core Principles](#) of Resocialization of Collegiate Sport (May 1, 2020).
2. Resocialization of Collegiate Sport: [Action Plan Considerations](#) (May 28, 2020).
3. Resocialization of Collegiate Sport: [Developing Standards for Practice and Competition](#) (July 16, 2020, updated Aug. 14, 2020).
4. Core Principles of [Resocialization of Collegiate Basketball](#) (Sept. 25, 2020).
5. Resocialization of Collegiate Sport: [Developing Standards for Practice and Competition, Second Edition](#) (Nov. 13, 2020).
6. Resocialization of Collegiate Sport: Developing Standards for Practice and Competition, [Updated Second Edition](#) (May 3, 2021).
7. Resocialization of Collegiate Sport: [2021 Summer Activities](#) (June 8, 2021).
8. Resocialization of Collegiate Sport: 2021 Fall Training and Competition Aug. 4, 2021).

These documents were published at important points in time with respect to the availability of COVID-19 data and information and related student-athlete practice and competition timelines.

The information in this 2021 Fall Training and Competition document was developed in consultation with the [NCAA COVID-19 Medical Advisory Group](#), the [American Medical Society for Sports Medicine Working Group](#) and the [Autonomy 5 Medical Advisory Group](#) and takes into consideration available recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The federal government has not published uniform federal guidance related to certain activities that occur within college athletics. However, through continued review and evaluation of available research data, anecdotal evidence and related analysis and discussion, these advisory groups have identified certain practices that should be highlighted for more focused consideration by member schools. While the materials encourage consideration of various factors and actions, they do not speak to every possible scenario, and in no event should members fall below national or public health standards set by their local communities.

As with prior NCAA publications, these materials are meant to be consistent with guidance published by the federal government and its health agencies and reflect the relevant scientific and medical information available at the time of print. These materials should not be used as a substitute for medical or legal advice. Rather, they are intended

as a resource to provide guidance for member schools to use in coordination with applicable government and related institutional policies and guidelines, and they remain subject to revision as available data and information in this space continue to emerge and evolve.

Overview

COVID-19 vaccination remains the most effective means to achieve control of the pandemic.¹ Although COVID-19 cases and deaths had declined considerably since their peak in January 2021, infection rates, hospitalizations and deaths have spiked during the past month, driven by the highly transmissible B.1.617.2 (delta) variant of SARS-CoV-2. Available data indicates that the vaccines authorized in the United States offer high levels of protection against severe illness and death from infection with the delta variant and other currently circulating variants of the virus.² Unvaccinated people and individuals with certain medical conditions remain at substantial risk for infection, severe illness and death, especially in areas where the level of community transmission is high.¹

Despite widespread vaccine availability, current vaccination rates are inadequate to provide community-level immunity and vary significantly state by state and county by county. However, because of emerging evidence that the delta variant is highly transmissible, and that fully vaccinated individuals can become infected by the delta variant and transmit COVID-19 to others even when asymptomatic, the concept of community-level immunity becomes less relevant. Instead, prevention strategies become paramount.^{3,4}

Given the rapidly evolving COVID-19 landscape, COVID-19 prevention and management strategies should be developed at the school and community level in each case in conjunction with federal, state and local public health guidance. This document provides broad considerations and does not replace federal, state and local public health guidance. Further, state laws may vary from federal and local public health guidance, so school decision-making should take into consideration any such discrepancies.

The table below provides health and safety considerations for Tier 1 individuals for fall training and competition. Individuals are considered "fully vaccinated" beginning 14 days after their final dose of a Pfizer, Moderna, Johnson & Johnson or AstraZeneca vaccination. The equivalent of "fully vaccinated" is documented COVID-19 infection in the past 90 days (or more than 90 days if allowed by local authorities). The CDC recommends that individuals who have a prior history of COVID-19 infection should become vaccinated,⁵ and it is recommended to wait until 90 days after the infection before commencing the vaccination process.

Because vaccination against COVID-19 can result in personal health benefits for vaccinated individuals and because the risks of adverse outcome with COVID-19 infection

are higher in unvaccinated individuals, considerations for these two categories of individuals are different.

Ultimately, unless there is federal guidance to the contrary, all decision-making should be guided by:

- Community-level immunity status;
- Community-level transmission;
- State law; and
- Local public health authorities.

The information below should serve as a supplement to, and not a substitute for, these broader considerations. In the event of a discrepancy between the consideration below and any law or guidance from any applicable health authority, the latter should be prioritized. Member schools are encouraged to consider actively [tracking](#) the level of community transmission, as this may impact decision-making.⁶

Given the rapidly changing scientific landscape, it is anticipated that Table 1 may be frequently updated.

Table 1. COVID-19 Management Considerations for Tier 1 Individuals.

		NOT FULLY VACCINATED	FULLY VACCINATED OR DOCUMENTED INFECTION IN THE PAST 90 DAYS (or more than 90 days if allowed by local authorities)
T E S T I N G	Upon Arrival to Campus, or Return to Campus from a Summer Break	<p>Single polymerase chain reaction/nucleic acid amplification test within three to five days of arrival, or two antigen tests on nonconsecutive days within three to five days of arrival.</p> <p>No team training or competition until single PCR/NAAT or both antigen tests are negative.</p>	No testing unless symptomatic, or based on a risk assessment of a documented close contact with COVID-19.
	Surveillance Testing	<p>Based on level of community immunity, community spread, and local public health official recommendations.</p> <p>If community spread is <u>substantial or high</u>, weekly PCR/NAAT testing or three-times-week antigen testing.</p>	No testing unless symptomatic, or based on a risk assessment of a documented close contact with COVID-19.
	During Competition Season	<p>Weekly PCR/NAAT testing or three times-a-week antigen testing when no competition is scheduled.</p> <p>PCR/NAAT test within three days of first competition of the week or antigen test within one day of each competition.</p>	No testing unless symptomatic, or based on a risk assessment of a documented close contact with COVID-19.
	Sustained Increased Transmission	<p>If sustained increased transmission on a team, test all symptomatic individuals or individuals with close contacts, or apply a similar risk mitigation strategy.</p> <p>Sustained increased transmission is likely occurring if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team of ≤ 50: Concurrent positive cases of three or more. • Team of > 50: Concurrent positive cases of five percent or more. 	

		NOT FULLY VACCINATED	FULLY VACCINATED OR DOCUMENTED INFECTION IN THE PAST 90 DAYS (or more than 90 days if allowed by local authorities)
QUARANTINE & ISOLATION	Close Contacts	Quarantine in accordance with local public health authority guidance for close contact with another individual with confirmed positive COVID-19. <u>Previous considerations</u> regarding activity during quarantine (e.g., individual exercise if it does not cause cardiopulmonary symptoms) continue to apply.	Masking in public indoor settings for 14 days with discontinuation if a COVID-19 test is performed three to five days after exposure and is negative, or if assessment does not reveal high risk.
	Positive Test Protocol	Isolation for 10 days and at least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms have improved. No exercise during isolation. Post-isolation exercise consistent with <u>previous recommendations</u> , including <u>cardiac considerations</u> .	
ATHLETICS	Training and Competition	No restrictions.	
	Team Travel	Masking during travel.	
	Other Athletic Activities (e.g., team meetings)	Universal masking and physical distancing.	Masking in indoor settings.
NONATHLETIC	Nonathletic Activities	Universal masking and physical distancing.	Masking in public indoor settings. Large crowd avoidance or masking where community immunity is unknown or vaccination status cannot be determined.
	In-Person Interactions	Universal masking and physical distancing.	Masking in indoor settings.



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References:

1. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, Vol. 70, July 27, 2021.
2. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/fully-vaccinated-people.html>.
3. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, Early Release, Vol. 70, July 30, 2021.
4. https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated_guidance.html.
5. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/faq.html>.
6. <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations-county-view>.

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