

August 20, 2021

Subj: Fall Update #1

Dear Colleagues,

As our students return to campus this week, we look forward to a joyous time as old friends reunite, new friends are made, and we experience a return to the vibrant campus atmosphere that we all know and love.

We appreciate the patience that so many of you have shown as we have all adjusted to having more people working from campus on a daily basis and the recent adjustments to our health and safety protocols. Our willingness to be flexible and patient with each other served us well last academic year, and we know that the same will be true for this year.

Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the updates and reminders that follow. As always, if you have any questions about the University's COVID-19 response, please check the [COVID website](#) or contact the hotline at 574-634-4373 or covidresponseunit@nd.edu.

Everyone should carry a mask and look for the signs

Due to the spread of highly contagious variants of COVID-19 and the University's inability to verify the vaccination status of those outside the highly vaccinated campus community, masks are required (except when eating and drinking) in the public areas of some campus buildings. Please remember to carry a mask with you at all times on campus so you are prepared. Buildings where masks are required – regardless of one's vaccination status – will display signage to that effect. For a complete list of mask-designated buildings, please refer to the University's [COVID website](#) often for the latest information.

Faculty may require masks in their classrooms, and all faculty and staff may require those who meet with them in their private offices to wear masks.

We are, of course, continuing to monitor closely conditions on campus, locally, and nationally. We will keep you fully apprised of any changes.

Guidance for the unvaccinated/temporary employees/contractors/family members

Those faculty and staff who are not fully vaccinated or who have not uploaded proof of vaccination must wear masks inside campus buildings, except when alone in a private office or when eating or drinking.

In addition, all temporary employees as well as contractors and family members of faculty and staff, and all other visitors to campus must wear masks indoors as indicated above.

Surveillance testing begins this week

Beginning this week, those faculty and staff who are unvaccinated or have not yet provided proof of vaccination, are required to report for weekly [surveillance testing](#) throughout the fall semester. For students, we are requiring an entry test for all unvaccinated students, and weekly surveillance testing will begin the

week of August 23. Surveillance testing will take place in the North Dome of the Joyce Center via the Gate 3 entrance by appointment only, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

At this time, fully vaccinated individuals are not subject to weekly surveillance testing. However, should any member of the Notre Dame community be asked to present for surveillance testing, it is the individual's responsibility to report as requested. For those vaccinated members of the community who would like to participate in surveillance testing, we will expect to start offering this option soon dependent on available testing capacity.

Noncompliance

Late last week, supervisors and academic leaders were given access to a report that identifies their direct reports who are required to participate in surveillance testing and indoor masking to ensure compliance. These campus leaders were also notified of procedures for addressing direct reports who do not comply with our surveillance testing or masking policies.

Diagnostic testing

All members of the Notre Dame community who have a high fever, difficulty breathing, loss of taste or smell, or feel ill more generally (e.g., persistent headache, body aches, sore throat, or fatigue) are encouraged to promptly seek a diagnostic COVID test.

Diagnostic testing is available to students, faculty, and staff in the Joyce Center by appointment only, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Faculty and staff can also schedule a diagnostic test by contacting the Notre Dame Wellness Center.

For testing sites and appointments available outside of the University, please [click here](#). When being tested for COVID at an off-campus facility (doctor's office, pharmacy, etc.), faculty and staff should take a photo of your test result and email it to the Wellness Center at ndocchealth@premisehealth.com or call 574-634-0050 to report a positive result.

COVID-19 exposure protocols

If you are fully vaccinated and are identified as a close contact of a COVID-19 positive case, **you do not need to quarantine if you are not exhibiting any symptoms**. You will be required to wear masks indoors on campus until you are administered a COVID test on Day 4 after exposure and receive a negative result. **Quarantine is required for those fully vaccinated individuals who exhibit symptoms** consistent with COVID-19.

Faculty and staff who are unvaccinated or have not yet provided proof of vaccination and are identified as a close contact of a COVID-19 positive case will be required to quarantine in their off-campus residences until they test negative on both Day 4 and Day 7 after exposure.

Faculty and staff vaccination requirement

We are pleased to report that 92% of our community has provided proof of vaccination, and 97% have either provided proof of vaccination or received an exemption. We expect the percentage vaccinated to rise a bit more in the next few weeks. Any current faculty or staff member who has not updated their vaccination status should [do so immediately](#). Please call askHR (574-631-5900) if you need assistance uploading your proof of vaccination. As new faculty and staff join the Notre Dame community, they are required to provide their vaccination status either prior to or within two days of their employment start date. [Learn more](#).

Keep washing your hands, and wear a mask if you have any illness symptoms

We strongly encourage all community members to wear a mask if you begin to experience any symptoms of illness. Last year, we saw rates of seasonal flu, strep throat, and upper respiratory tract infections decline –

likely due to widespread handwashing and mask-wearing. Please stay home when you are unwell, and wear a mask on campus until your symptoms have resolved.

Child/elder care days

As many schools in our area open this week, there are concerns about how they will handle exposure to COVID-19 and required quarantines for children. We anticipate there will be times during the fall semester when staff are not able to work from campus due to COVID-related child and elder care needs. We encourage managers and supervisors to be flexible with these situations and allow work from home when possible. Since remote work is not possible for every role on campus, we are re-introducing 10 temporary Child/Elder Care Leave Days. Staff can use these leave days through December 31, 2021, for times when children need to quarantine (up to 10 days) due to an exposure or to take care of elders affected by COVID. [Learn more](#) about the benefits available to help address child and elder care needs.

COVID dashboard

In an effort to keep students, faculty, and staff informed of COVID-19 test numbers and transmission rates on campus, the [dashboard](#) on the University's [COVID website](#) will go live for the fall semester the week of August 30. The dashboard will be updated weekly and include information regarding positive cases on campus as well as the number of surveillance and diagnostic tests administered.

Fall travel policy

On August 21, the University's [fall travel policy](#) will go into effect. University-related domestic travel may resume without the need for special pre-approvals. However, until further notice, due to the high incidence of COVID-19 infections and uneven access to vaccines around the world, University-related international travel must be approved in advance by a vice president or dean.

Closing thoughts

Please continue to take care of yourselves and each other. Enjoy the warmth of the final weeks of summer and the beauty of campus – like these Rudbeckia, as captured in this beautiful photo by University Senior Photographer Matt Cashore.



Please be kind to each other and generous with yourselves.

With regards,

Marie Lynn Miranda, Provost
Shannon Cullinan, Executive Vice President