



Update on COVID impact and related campus actions

Dean Of Students, Coe College <dos@coe.edu>

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Reply-To: dos@coe.edu

To: All Students <allstudents@coe.edu>



Dear Kohawk Community,

Due to the Delta variant, the rise in COVID-19 cases nationally is being reflected locally in Cedar Rapids and Linn County. Cases countywide are trending upward, and the positivity rate in Linn County is currently above 10%. This new data has necessitated temporary action that will impact the start of the term.

While each of us hoped the situation wouldn't call for a review of our planned protocols, we are optimistic that with what may feel like an inconvenience, we can layer in some prevention strategies that fully preserve the student experience we have been so excited to return to, and protect our plans to remain an in-person learning and living community.

Masking Policy Updates

At the onset of the school year, effective August 13th and through Friday, September 10th, all individuals regardless of vaccination status will be required to mask indoors in academic spaces, indoors in group settings of 30 or more, during transportation to college events and activities, and in indoor areas where there are community members who are at-risk.

Areas where masks are required will be clearly marked. A map will be provided to the community in the coming days. Masks for vaccinated individuals will be optional for residence halls and dining spaces, though unvaccinated individuals should continue to wear masks in every indoor space on campus, in accordance with CDC guidance. We are considering the implementation of masking exemptions for spaces with high vaccination rates, and we will communicate those once we have worked through the details.

For a few weeks, we are asking individuals to take some small steps to collectively protect the highest risk people and spaces as we start the fall term, and we assure you that we will evaluate the need for campus wide masking policies as we learn more about our own community experience.

Surveillance Testing

We are considering the implementation of weekly surveillance testing for students, faculty and staff who have not registered COVID-19 vaccination in September, both to encourage vaccination and to ensure we

understand the impact of the virus on campus. For those of you who have not yet taken that step, you can register for the vaccine clinic on campus on Monday, August 16th by clicking [here](#).

Over the next several weeks, we will be monitoring our campus experience with the virus, and establishing benchmarks and contingency planning for lightening or strengthening our mitigation efforts as necessary, and we hope to remove these temporary measures as soon as possible.

Communication

Beginning next week we will share weekly communications as we did last fall and spring, as well as twice weekly updates regarding positive cases, quarantine and isolation numbers on campus.

Vaccine and Testing Registration

As of today, 93% of our faculty and staff are vaccinated. By early next week we will have final data regarding student vaccination percentages, but we are very excited to report we have surpassed 1,255 vaccinations in the student, faculty, and staff community! If you have not yet done so:

- Please register your vaccine [here](#)
- If unvaccinated, register for a test [here](#) and report your testing confirmation [here](#). Athletes who are testing with their teams do not need to register for college testing.

The higher our vaccination rate as a community, the more flexibility we may have in the future.

Academic and Student Residential Living Spaces

Academic buildings requiring masks include: Marquis, Stuart, Peterson, Dows, Hickok, Struve Communication Center, classrooms only in the Clark Racquet Center, the ARC and Eby.

- The library will require masking on the lower level and the main floor. The two upper levels do not require masking.

Student residential living spaces in which masking is not required include: Voorhees, Armstrong/Douglas, Murray, Greene, Gage Memorial Union, Clark Racquet Center, ARC, Eby, all Coe apartments and houses including Hamptons, Kohawk Village, Brandt, Spivey, Morris, Schlarbaum, off-campus houses, 4-Plex, 327 15th Street, 226-228 14th Street, 8-plex, Whipple Firehouse, E-Ave apartments, Crimson & Gold Apartments etc.

Administrative Spaces

All other spaces can be presumed to be mask optional unless marked with signage in front. This includes the administrative spaces of: McCabe Hall, Nassif House, Clarke Alumni House, Voorhees Lobby (street entrance) and the Gage Union work spaces for Student Life, Student Success & Persistence, Campus Security & Information, the Coe Bookstore, Mailroom and Print Center. Attached is the signage that indicates a space is considered one that requires a mask. We ask that when you see the signage or are asked to mask, be considerate of the staff in these spaces. To that end, we encourage the Coe community to start getting familiar with the idea of wearing a mask on your wrist when on campus.

September Reevaluation

Our hope and intention is to return to a more flexible masking protocol for those who would prefer it as soon as possible, and we will update campus no later than September 10th. To make these decisions, we will be monitoring our vaccination status, public health guidance, and cases on our campus and in the county to guide us, just as we did successfully during the 2020-21 school year. Last year, our campus environment was often below the community transmission and positivity rates so we will place special emphasis on our community data.

We know you may have questions about this approach or individual needs. For questions about vaccines, testing, or to report positive test results, please contact covid@coe.edu. For accommodations or policy questions, students should email dos@coe.edu and faculty/staff can email o-hr@coe.edu.

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