



Hounds Stronger Together: Ensuring Educational and Operational Continuity

A comprehensive plan to promote the health and safety of the Assumption University community for fall 2021 assuming a 90 percent vaccination rate for students, faculty and staff.

Contents of this document are current as of January 1, 2022 and subject to change.



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Introduction

Assumption University is committed to providing a safe, in-person living and learning experience for students, faculty, and staff amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. This document shares the safety protocols enacted in response to the pandemic for vaccinated and vaccine-exempt individuals. In keeping with our commitment to the health and well-being of individuals and the community, the below protocols depend on the infection rates on campus, in Worcester, and in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. As such, these protocols are subject to change. Any changes will be communicated to members of the University community.

COVID-19 Booster Shot Requirement

Given the rapid spread of the Omicron variant and the significant decline in the public health situation in Massachusetts, **the University now requires all students, faculty, and staff to obtain the booster shot.** (Note, individuals with an approved exemption do not need to get a booster shot.) This requirement is critical if the University can achieve its goals of sustained, in-person classes and providing students a residential experience. The [Commonwealth of Massachusetts has opened five vaccination sites](#) that accept walk-ins or appointments.

DEADLINE FOR THE COVID-19 BOOSTER

Students

Students currently eligible for the booster shot must obtain such before returning to campus if they can get one. [There are several sites throughout the country and Commonwealth offering the booster shot.](#) (If students cannot obtain a booster shot before returning to campus, they must do so before February 1.) Students who are not yet eligible for the booster shot must obtain one within one week of their date of eligibility.

Employees

University employees currently eligible for the COVID-19 booster shot must obtain such no later than Thursday, January 6, the day before students return to campus, or by February 1 if they cannot obtain one. Employees who are not yet eligible for the booster must get the booster shot within one week of their date of eligibility.

Testing

Surveillance testing is a key mitigation strategy in the spread of COVID-19. The University Testing Center, located in Hagan Hall, will be open Monday through Thursday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Fridays from 8:45 a.m. until 12 noon. At present, fully vaccinated individuals are tested twice per week. Students, faculty, and staff not vaccinated due to an approved exemption are tested three times per week. The Testing Center will schedule tests to help our community with testing compliance. We ask that members of the campus community make their appointments during their onboarding test.

Access to Remote Learning

Access to remote learning will only be offered to those in isolation or quarantine, as confirmed by University Health Services. **Individuals testing positive off-campus or at home must upload a copy of their positive test result to Medcat.** If necessary, the University is prepared to transition to remote learning should we experience a surge of COVID-19 on campus.

Masking

The University continues to follow the guidelines of the CDC and state and local departments of public health. Masks are required indoors on campus for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals. We will continue to monitor the health conditions and our campus vaccination rate. As such, the masking policy will be revisited in the hopes that masking would be optional for fully vaccinated individuals. There are many reasons why individuals choose to wear a mask, including but not limited to high risk for COVID-19 complications, someone at home is high risk or unable to be vaccinated, allergy season, or is having symptoms.

Unvaccinated individuals approved for an exemption will be required to wear a mask indoors and outdoors in all public spaces, including classrooms, the recreation center, library, residence hall common areas, etc.

All campus community members, whether vaccinated or unvaccinated, must wear a mask in the University Testing Center and the Health Center.

Symptom Tracker

During the spring 2022 semester, the University will not require students, faculty, and staff to complete the daily symptom tracker or display the symptom tracker at the front gate. All community members will be required to show and swipe their University identification to access campus. Students who test positive for COVID-19 or are in quarantine due to an exposure are asked to complete the daily monitoring questionnaire in the symptom tracker. University identification for those who test positive for COVID-19 will be deactivated.

University Identification and Lanyard

Controlling access to campus to promote the health and safety of the community is a priority for the University. Given that some members of our community must wear a mask when outside of offices and residence hall rooms or opt to do so, the University must have a means to easily determine if individuals are authorized to be present on campus. As such, all students, faculty, and staff are provided an Assumption University branded lanyard that must be worn at all times when outside of offices or residence hall rooms. Lanyards will accommodate University-issued identification and are distributed in the Testing Center.

Classrooms

Classrooms have returned to full occupancy. Should the current indoor mask mandate be lifted, vaccinated students and faculty will not be required to wear masks during the class period. However, unvaccinated students and faculty with an approved exemption must wear masks while indoors and outdoors. Drinking and eating will not be permitted in classroom spaces regardless of vaccination status. Students should wipe down their desks following the class period for the next student. Classrooms will be deep cleaned each evening.

Inter-hall Visitation Policy

Residential students are permitted to visit friends in other residential areas. Vaccinated and unvaccinated students with approved exemptions must wear masks while visiting friends in other residence hall areas.

Gathering Policy

The maximum occupancy for gatherings in Alumni, Desautels, Hanrahan, Nault, Salisbury, West, Worcester, and Young Residence Halls is double the occupancy of the room, plus two (times 2, plus 2). For example, a residence hall room that houses four students may have a gathering with up to 10 people present (including the resident(s); a room that houses two students may have a gathering with up to 6 people present, including the resident (s).

While the University historically permits larger gatherings in apartment-style housing as described under the Gathering Policy, out of an abundance of caution due to COVID-19, the maximum occupancy for all residential settings will be limited to double the occupancy of the room plus two (times 2, plus 2) until further notice. For example, an apartment that houses six students may have a gathering with up to 14 people (including the resident(s)).

Off-campus Visitors

Guests may visit campus if they can demonstrate proof of vaccination or a negative PCR test within 72 hours of arrival. There is no need to preregister to visit campus. Given the rapid increase in positive cases on campus, overnight guests will not be permitted at this time. This policy will be reconsidered once the semester is underway.

Spectators at Athletic Events

Members of the campus community and guests are welcome to attend athletic events if they can provide proof of vaccination or a negative PCR test within 72 hours of arrival on campus.

Resumption of University-sponsored Travel

Effective September 24, 2021, University-sponsored domestic travel resumed for faculty and staff. Employees are required to follow any guidelines by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the CDC. Any international travel requires approval from the employee's Vice President. Employees will not be permitted to travel to locations identified by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or Federal Government as a travel restricted location due to COVID-19.

Employee Use of Dining Facilities

Employees may enjoy meals in University dining facilities.

Catered Meals

Catered meals are possible but require pre-approval by the division Vice President. Catered meals should be individually packaged. BBQs and other meals are acceptable if the food is served by the Sodexo staff (i.e., no self-service).

Campus Eating Locations for Students

Students are encouraged to eat with others in Taylor Dining Hall, Charlies in Hagan Hall, or outdoors. Students may eat and drink in common area spaces only if sitting alone.

Faculty-Staff Use of Conference Rooms

Meetings are encouraged to continue to be held virtually however, in-person meetings were permitted effective August 2, 2021. Group size and room configuration should be considered in providing ample social distancing and proper ventilation. Masks are required indoors for all community members at this time. If the mask requirement is lifted for vaccinated individuals, any members not vaccinated because of an approved exemption must wear a mask or join remotely.

Student Meetings

Student meetings are encouraged to continue to be held virtually however, in-person meetings are permitted. No more than 10% of the group may have an approved exemption from the vaccine to meet in person. Group size and room configuration should be considered in providing ample social distancing and proper ventilation. Masks are required indoors for all community members at this time. As the mask requirement is lifted for vaccinated individuals, any members not vaccinated because of an approved exemption must wear a mask or join

remotely.

Travel Quarantine

Members of the community who are fully vaccinated are not expected to quarantine following any kind of travel if they are asymptomatic. Symptomatic vaccinated individuals should follow the guidance of their health care provider and quarantine until a negative COVID-19 test is obtained.

Unvaccinated travelers, including those with an approved exemption, must follow any recommendations of quarantine by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Unvaccinated members of the community who travel and return to campus should test, then quarantine until a negative result is determined.

Isolation and Quarantine Requirements

Students and employees who test positive for COVID-19 and are **asymptomatic** are required to isolate for five days (students must isolate at home if they live within 200 miles of campus) and continue to wear a mask for an additional five days both inside and outside. Anyone positive with COVID-19 and symptomatic will continue to isolate for the full ten days. Students must be cleared by Health Services to return to in-person classes.

Anyone exposed to a COVID-19 positive person who has not received the booster dose and are six months from their last Moderna or Pfizer vaccine dose (or two months from the last Johnson & Johnson dose) must quarantine for at least five days and wear a mask indoors and outdoors for an additional five days. Students who live within 200 miles of campus will quarantine at home.

Travel off campus

Residential students may travel off-campus and resume activities in accordance with state and local guidelines. Unvaccinated students are expected to wear a mask while off-campus. All students are reminded that area businesses may have their own health protocols in place. As stated in the student handbook, students represent the University both on and off-campus, and student violations off-campus, including health protocols, may be referred to the Office of Community Standards.

Off-campus events, field trips, internships, practicum, volunteer service, work, etc.

The University continues to monitor our local, state, and national COVID-19 infection rates to inform our engagement with off-campus community partners. Volunteer service, field trips, internships, work, and other co-curricular activities are critical components of the Assumption experience. Students, faculty, and staff engaged in off-campus activities should follow the health protocols of the visiting site. In Massachusetts, masks are optional for vaccinated individuals but required for unvaccinated individuals with an approved exemption. Worcester currently requires indoor mask-wearing regardless of vaccination status. Individual businesses

can determine their own health protocols, and members of the community are expected to comply with both state and business health protocols.