



The Return of the Flock

EMAIL TO THE WASHINGTON COLLEGE COMMUNITY – 2/11/22

To the Washington College Community,

Happy Friday! We hope you are able to get out and enjoy this beautiful stretch of weather. We have our weekly round-up of information below, to include an important update on quarantine and isolation procedures.

COVID update:

This week we had a total of 6 new COVID cases on campus (this count reflects testing from 2/7 – 2/10), down significantly from last week. At present, we have 5 students residing in isolation housing on campus.

Isolation & Quarantine – New CDC Guidelines Released for IHEs (Institutions of Higher Education)

Earlier this week, the CDC released new guidance for IHEs, which aligns the isolation period for someone who tests positive with the guidance given to the general public, regardless of vaccination status. While we were already following the revised isolation guidelines for those who are vaccinated and boosted, we are revising the isolation standards for all individuals in response to this new information from the CDC. The reason for this change from the CDC was the recognition that while we are a congregate living setting, there is a lower risk of severe health outcomes associated with young adults.

Effective immediately, our [isolation guidelines](#) will be applied universally to all individuals who test positive, regardless of vaccination status. Those guidelines for isolation are:

Any individual who tests positive for COVID-19 will be required to isolate for at least 5 days, starting from the date of the positive test, which is considered day 0.

- If the individual's case was asymptomatic, OR if their symptoms were mild and have fully resolved in that time, they will:
 - Be eligible to do a repeat test on day 6. If that test is negative, then they will be released from isolation. A symptomatic individual must have resolution of fever for at least 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medications) and improvements of any other symptoms.
 - If that day 6 repeat test is positive, the individual must remain in isolation and will be eligible for a re-test on day 8. Should that test again return a positive result, they will remain in isolation until day 10. After day 10, they will be released with no re-test required.
- If the individual's symptoms are moderate to severe and have NOT resolved in 5 days, they will not be eligible to be released from isolation after 5 days.
- Anyone who is experiencing severe symptoms may need further time in isolation.

It is important to remember that these are guidelines, and Health Services works with each person individually on the isolation plan, considering factors such as any underlying health conditions or concerns. The above should not be interpreted as if isolation will only be 5 days regardless. Please note



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as well that the time in isolation begins from the date of the positive test. For that reason, it is critical that anyone who begins to experience symptoms – even mild ones – get tested immediately.

The CDC also revised the quarantine guidelines for those who are not up-to-date with their vaccinations, revising the time in quarantine to 5 days. Please note that the date of your direct exposure is considered day 0, and day 1 is the first full day after your last close contact with a person who has had COVID. Quarantine is only necessary for close contact exposures, which is being closer than 6' to someone for more than 15 minutes. [Those updated guidelines for quarantine](#) are:

Individuals who are unvaccinated or are not up-to-date with their vaccination (to include the booster shot) and are exposed to COVID through close contact should quarantine for at least 5 full days, and get tested 5 days after their last close contact with someone with COVID. They should also watch for symptoms and if any develop, isolate and get tested immediately.

Individuals who are fully vaccinated and are exposed to COVID through close contact do not need to quarantine unless they have developed symptoms, but should get tested 5 days after their last close contact with someone with COVID. They should also watch for symptoms and if any develop, isolate and get tested immediately.

As with isolation, the response to a close contact exposure will follow guidelines, but may vary based on an individual's unique circumstances. It is important that all workers coordinate with HR, and students with Health Services, on questions surrounding quarantine and how best to manage things like indirect exposure or ongoing household exposure.

A Note on these Updates

We will continue to evaluate our COVID operations against new guidance and conditions in our community and on our campus. While these updates and the shifts in guidance may seem never-ending, we are doing our best to remain responsive and nimble in the face of a virus that is ever-changing and determined to keep us all on our toes. You can reasonably expect further changes as the semester goes on and we continue to find the right balance between protecting the community and re-establishing normal campus activities.

We are updating the guidance on the website as changes occur, so if you have questions about what the latest and greatest is, please refer to the information included in this section:

<https://www.washcoll.edu/coronavirus/>

We appreciate your cooperation and support. Have a great weekend!