



# WC CPG Update: Summer Edition



## EMAIL TO THE WASHINGTON COLLEGE COMMUNITY

**CPG Update – August 13, 2021**

**To the Washington College Community,**

With just a few weeks left until our much-anticipated return to campus, we are looking forward to proceeding with the in-person semester and experiences that mark another step towards a return to normal.

With 92% of our student population vaccinated (and climbing), we are ready to come back together and begin to reclaim those personal connections that define the Washington College experience. We greatly appreciate every student's support and cooperation in meeting -- and then surpassing -- our goal vaccine rate; it validates what we already know about this community, which is that we are better and stronger when we work together towards a common goal.

### **Update to Masking Policy**

Previously, we communicated that we were prepared to shift our fall policy around masks, making them optional indoors for anyone who is fully vaccinated.

However, as you are likely aware, there is now emerging evidence that the Delta variant is highly transmissible, and that even fully vaccinated individuals can become infected by the Delta variant and transmit COVID-19 to others even when asymptomatic. In light of this new data, the CDC masking guidance has evolved to indicate that even fully vaccinated individuals should be masked when indoors in areas of the country with substantial or high community transmission rates.

With Kent County now officially listed as having substantial spread of COVID, and in accordance with CDC guidance, we are adopting this revised indoor mask policy effective immediately. This means that for now, **we will require both vaccinated and unvaccinated people to wear masks in public indoor areas on campus.**

Effective immediately and until further notice, our COVID guidelines now include the following:

- Everyone on campus must be masked in all public indoor spaces; private offices and student rooms and suites are not considered public and therefore the requirement does not apply in these areas.
- Public spaces are all of those areas where you are likely to come in contact with individuals that you do not live with or share an office with. While not an exhaustive list, the following are examples of public indoor spaces:
  - Residence hall common areas, lounges, hallways and shared bathrooms
  - Classrooms and labs
  - JFC and Cain Athletic Center
  - Casey Academic Center (CAC)
  - Miller Library



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- Hodson Hall – in dining areas, masks are required except when eating or drinking
- Theatres and other large meeting areas
- Co-workers who regularly occupy the same workspace may – by agreement – remove their masks indoors when no outside visitors are in that shared workspace.
- For vaccinated individuals in outdoor spaces, masks are optional. For unvaccinated individuals in outdoor spaces where social distancing is not possible, masks are advised.
- We reserve the right to require masks be worn by all attendees at some large outdoor events. If this is a requirement, that information will be clearly communicated and posted.
- During gateway testing, masks will be required by everyone, regardless of vaccination status.
- Any unvaccinated individuals who are required to participate in surveillance testing are required to be masked for that regular testing.

## Additional Guidance

In addition to these changes to the mask policy, please note the following:

- Vaccinated individuals who are exposed to someone with COVID do not need to quarantine, but in accordance with CDC guidance do have the following requirements:
  - COVID testing 3 to 5 days after exposure
  - Mask-wearing for 14 days after their exposure, or at least until they receive a negative test result. The individual may return to current campus-wide masking policy if the COVID-19 test is negative.
- We encourage you to adopt an “Outdoor First” policy and where possible, hold meetings or activities outdoors.
- For club/organization meetings or one-on-ones, meeting virtually is still an option as well, so we encourage you to continue to utilize Zoom where it can be done so effectively. **(Note: All academic instruction will remain in-person – this guidance does not apply to classes, only other types of meetings.)**
- Surveillance testing for unvaccinated students, staff and faculty is currently set to weekly; this frequency may increase.

We understand that this a lot to deal with, particularly when we were looking forward to proceeding with fewer prevention measures in place. But as new information comes to light, we owe it to you and to our community to stay the course on the strategies that have proven successful since this pandemic began – and with the surge of the Delta variant, that means deploying these additional measures for the time being.

We are hopeful that this change will be short-lived, but as we have all learned, there is no way to predict the ever-changing nature of this virus and its impact on our operations. What we can and will do is



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adapt our campus-wide policies as needed, which means there is the potential for scaling our safety measures up and down in the coming months.

We promise to continue to keep you apprised of these adjustments.