

Colleagues,

As the semester opens, we wanted to share reminders of simple practices we can all do, every day, to keep our community as safe as possible. Additionally, you'll find information on faculty and staff testing as we return to classes. Apologies for another addition to your inbox today but wanted to be sure that you had the latest testing dates and times.

Monitor your Health

Faculty and staff must conduct self-symptom monitoring every day before reporting to work and must be free of ANY symptoms potentially related to COVID-19. These symptoms include one or more of the following:

Cough - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing - Fever - Chills - Congestion or runny nose - Muscle/body aches - Headache - Sore throat - Fatigue - New GI symptoms (nausea/vomiting/diarrhea) - New loss of taste or smell

Employees who exhibit symptoms should not report to work and should contact their primary care physician and the Berkshire Health Systems (BHS) COVID-19 hotline at 855-262-5465 for guidance about testing. The hotline is open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. seven days a week. As well, employees should contact their supervisor to notify them that they will not report to work, and to receive guidance regarding their return.

Mask Up

People are required to wear a mask over their mouth and nose when at indoor and outdoor public locations, and when in a carpool with non-household members. Employees are expected to report to work with an appropriate face covering and to wear it during the workday. The only time an employee does not need to wear their mask is if they are working in their individual office alone. If someone enters their office or if they leave their office, they must wear their mask. Following the Executive Order issued in November, if an employee requests an accommodation so as not to have to wear a mask at work due to a medical condition, they need to contact Human Resources and provide documentation verifying the health condition that prevents them from wearing a mask.

Faculty and Staff COVID-19 Testing and Dashboard

Faculty and staff who are working on campus have access to free monthly COVID-19 testing on campus. Additionally, should they wish to do so, they will be able to take additional tests weekly for a \$25 fee. Testing consent forms from the fall semester are still valid. Employees who want to test on campus but have not previously done so must complete the [consent form](#) and bring it with them to their first appointment.

Please also know that there are now Stop the Spread sites (the Commonwealth's free COVID-19 testing program) in Berkshire County (North Adams, Pittsfield, Great Barrington). Appointments at any of the Stop the Spread sites can be made by calling the Berkshire Health Systems COVID-19 hotline: 855-262-5465.

Employee testing times for the first weeks of the semester are as follows: Tuesday, January 26 through Friday, January 30, 2021 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Beginning the week of February 1, 2021 testing will take place Monday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Appointments are not necessary until February 8. Testing will take place in the Amsler Center Gymnasium. Please note that there may be delays to the usual 24–48-hour turnaround time as most schools across the Broad Institute’s service area open this week and Broad is forecasting higher than usual demand. Thank you for your patience as we navigate opening week testing.

Starting February 8, appointments **WILL** be necessary for regular testing during the semester and the link to sign up for an appointment and payment information will be posted on the COVID-19 site next week.

MCLA’s COVID-19 dashboard will be updated weekly on Fridays, starting this week, to align with state and municipal level reporting that is released weekly late on Thursdays.

Student COVID-19 Testing and Protocol

Testing for over 400 residents and commuters began this weekend and resident students are following quarantine protocols until they are released by Health Services, in line with testing guidance from our Department of Public Health partners. Start of semester testing continues this week and regular surveillance testing for both residents and commuters will follow throughout the semester. Please direct all student COVID-19 testing inquiries (including word of a student who tests positive) to MCLA Health Services via phone or email: 413-662-5421, HealthServices@MCLA.edu .

For additional details, answers to FAQs, and the most up-to-date information related to COVID-19 for our campus, please reference [MCLA’s COVID-19 site](#) or reach out to me personally with any questions and/or concerns. Thank you for your continued efforts to keep our campus community as safe as possible for another semester.

Best wishes for a smooth start this week,

Gina

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