

COVID-19 Update Plan for Employees

First Issued - June 1, 2020

Latest Revision - February 28, 2022



COLLEGE OF THE
ALBEMARLE

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Guiding Principles

Over the past two years, we have seen the world change in many ways. We have pivoted frequently to ensure best practices for individual and community safety were in line with local, state and federal recommendations. This guide serves as a reference of those updates and it will continue to reflect the most current guidance for our COA family.

Employees are required to review this document frequently, and as email notifications are sent, for updates and revisions.



Return to the Workplace

Workplace Expectations & Guidelines

For your safety and for the safety of all, every employee is expected to fully comply with the college's COVID-19-related policies, procedures, and protocols, as well as the guidelines outlined in this document.

Prior to Returning to Work

Due to the nature of COVID-19, it is inherently difficult to identify a specific set of symptoms that are associated with the virus. As such, it is imperative that every employee monitor their own health daily. If you are experiencing COVID like symptoms, but have received a negative test result & alternative diagnosis, please follow your health care provider's guidance prior to reporting back to campus.

If employees identify any change in their own health, they should use the [Check My Symptoms](#) link provided by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services.

- **Symptoms to be aware of:** People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| • Cough | • Headache |
| • Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing | • Sore throat |
| • Fever or Chills | • Fatigue |
| • Muscle or body aches | • Congestion or runny nose |
| • New loss of taste or smell | • Nausea or vomiting |
| • Diarrhea | |

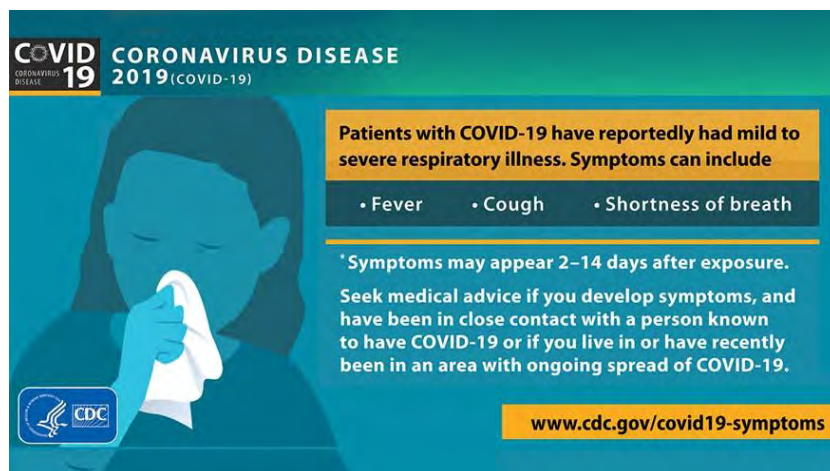
This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.



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If you...	Steps to take...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> live in a community where COVID-19 is or might be spreading (currently, that is virtually everywhere in the United States): 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch Your Health. Be alert for symptoms. Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take your temperature if symptoms develop. Practice social distancing. Maintain 6 feet of distance from others, and stay out of crowded places. Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> feel healthy but: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recently had close contact with a positive COVID-19 individual: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay Home and Monitor Your Health. (QUARANTINE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home according to the guidelines as outlined by the CDC. Watch for symptoms of COVID-19. If possible, stay away from people who are at higher-risk for getting very sick from COVID-19.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or Are waiting for test results, or Have cough, fever, or shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolate Yourself from Others (ISOLATION) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home until it is safe to be around others. If you live with others, stay in a specific sick room or area and away from other people or animals, including pets. Use a separate bathroom, if available. Read important information about caring for yourself or someone else who is sick, including when it's safe to end home isolation.

- Employees are required to follow COA's protocol for reporting any absences related to your immediate supervisor. Supervisor will notify the HR Office, if necessary.
- All employees are responsible for being familiar with the CDC information on [How to Protect Yourself and Others](#) and practice
- Employee COVID-19 Testing is available. Please email Robin Harris for an appointment.



[CDC COVID-19 Guidance \(updated 12/27/21\)](#)

The Rule of 5

- **Employees with COVID-19** (regardless of vaccination status) should isolate for 5 days and if they are asymptomatic or their symptoms are resolving (without fever for 24 hours), follow that by 5 days of wearing a mask when around others to minimize the risk of infecting those they encounter.
- **Employees who are exposed** and are unvaccinated or are more than six months out from their second mRNA dose (or more than 2 months after the J&J vaccine) and not yet boosted, CDC now recommends quarantine for 5 days followed by strict mask use for an additional 5 days.
 - If a 5-day quarantine is not feasible, it is imperative that an exposed person wear a well-fitting mask at all times when around others for 10 days after exposure.
 - Individuals who have received their booster shot do not need to quarantine following an exposure, but should wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure.
 - Best practice would also include a test for SARS-CoV-2 at day 5 after exposure.

Definitions:

- **Close contacts** are someone who was less than 6 feet away from an infected person (laboratory-confirmed or a clinical diagnosis) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. For example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes.
- **Exposure** refers to contact with someone infected with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, in a way that increases the likelihood of getting infected with the virus.
- **Isolation** relates to behavior after a confirmed infection. Isolation for 5 days followed by wearing a well-fitting mask will minimize the risk of spreading the virus to others.
- **Quarantine** refers to the time following exposure to the virus or close contact with someone known to have COVID-19.
- **Up To Date** refers to a person who has received all recommended COVID-19 vaccines, including any booster dose(s) when eligible.
- **Fully Vaccinated** refers to a person who has received their primary series of COVID-19 vaccines.

If employees are feeling ill they should stay home! As a college, we will continue to be as flexible as possible during this challenging time. In no instance should an employee report to work if they are actively running a fever. Employees are encouraged to talk with a doctor before returning to campus.



If You Test Positive for COVID-19 (ISOLATE)	
Everyone, regardless of vaccination status.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home for 5 days.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you can leave your house/return to work.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to wear a mask around others for an additional 5 days.
	<i>*If you have a fever, continue to stay home until your fever resolves.</i>

If You Were Exposed to Someone with COVID-19 (QUARANTINE)	
<p>If you:</p> <p>Have been boosted OR Completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last 6 months OR Completed the primary series of J&J vaccine within the last 2 months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wear a mask around others for 10 days. Test on day 5, if possible <p><i>*If you develop symptoms get a test and stay home.</i></p>
<p>If you:</p> <p>Completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine over 6 months ago and are NOT boosted OR Completed the primary series of J&J over 2 months ago and are NOT boosted OR Are unvaccinated</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay home for 5 days. After that continue to wear a mask around others for 5 days. If you can't quarantine you must wear a mask for 10 days. Test on day 5 if possible. <p><i>*If you develop symptoms get a test and stay home.</i></p>

Initial/Primary Vaccination

Everyone 5 years and older is recommended to receive their first “primary” series of a COVID-19 vaccine to be considered vaccinated.

- For children 5 years through 17 years of age, a primary series consists of 2 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.
- For persons 18 and older, a primary series consists of:
 - A 2-dose series of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna), or
 - A single-dose COVID-19 vaccine (Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen vaccine) Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (COVID-19 mRNA vaccines) are preferred. You may get Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen COVID-19 vaccine in some situations.

Stay Up to Date with Your Vaccines – Booster Eligibility and Time

CDC recommends that people remain up to date with their vaccines, which includes additional doses for individuals who are immunocompromised or booster doses for others who have had their primary doses and a certain period of time has passed. Who should get boosters and when – to remain up to date - are below – depending on what you received as your primary vaccine:

PFIZER-BIONTECH **was your primary/initial vaccine:**

Who should get a booster: Everyone 12 years and older

When to get a booster: At least 5 months after completing your primary COVID-19 vaccination series

Which booster can you get: Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (mRNA COVID-19 vaccines) are preferred in most* situations

Teens 12–17 years old may only get a Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine booster

MODERNA **was your primary/initial vaccine:**

Who should get a booster: Adults 18 years and older

When to get a booster: At least 5 months after completing your primary COVID-19 vaccination series

Which booster can you get: Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (mRNA COVID-19 vaccines) are preferred in most situations

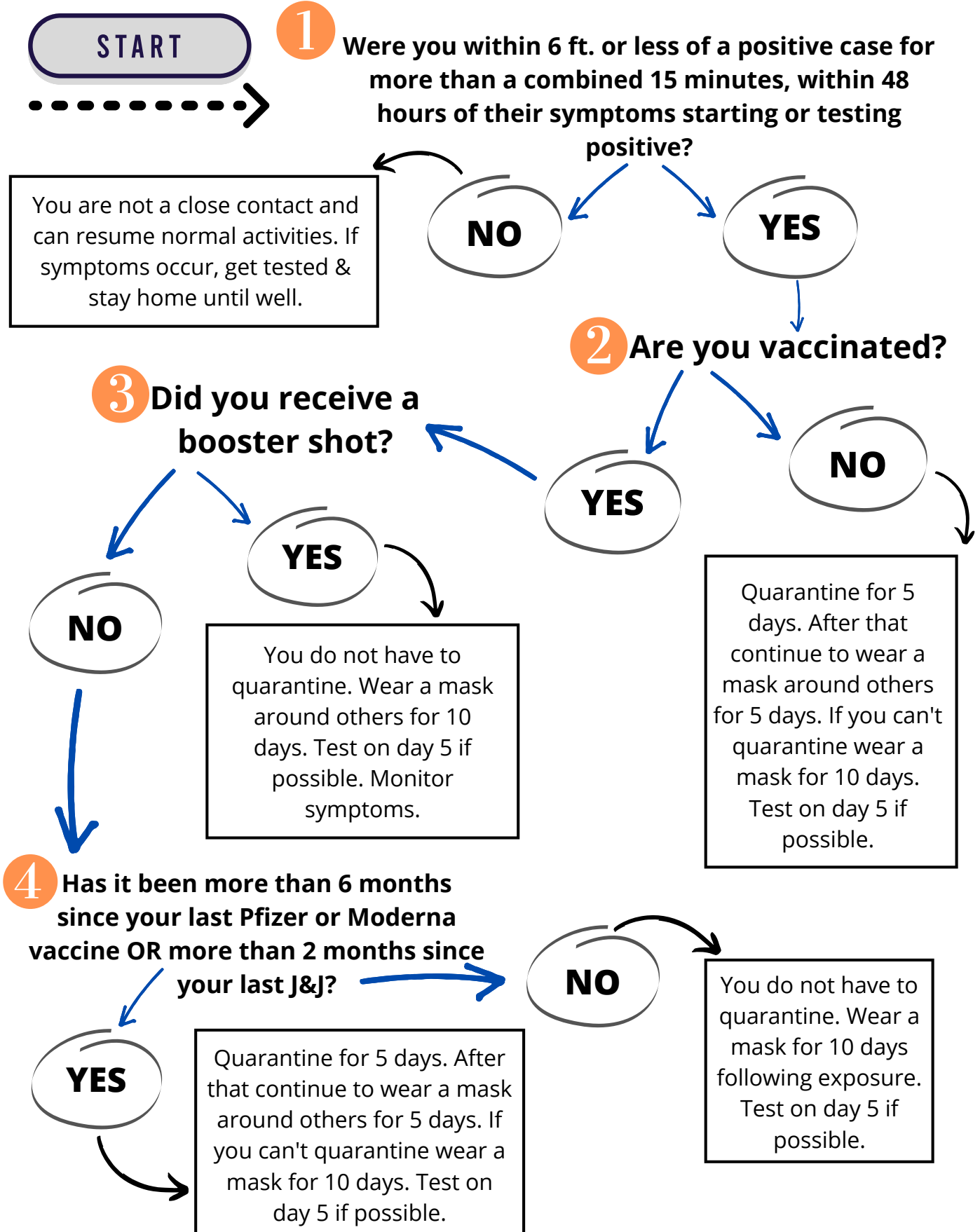
JOHNSON & JOHNSON’S JANSSEN* **was your primary/initial vaccine:**

Who should get a booster: Adults 18 years and older

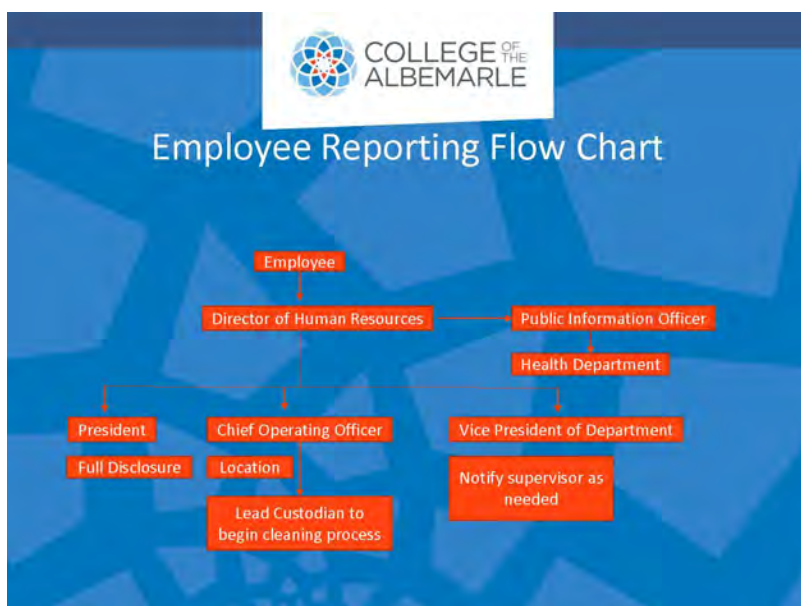
When to get a booster: At least 2 months after receiving your J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccination

Which booster can you get: Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna (mRNA COVID-19 vaccines) are preferred in most situations

Quarantine Guidance



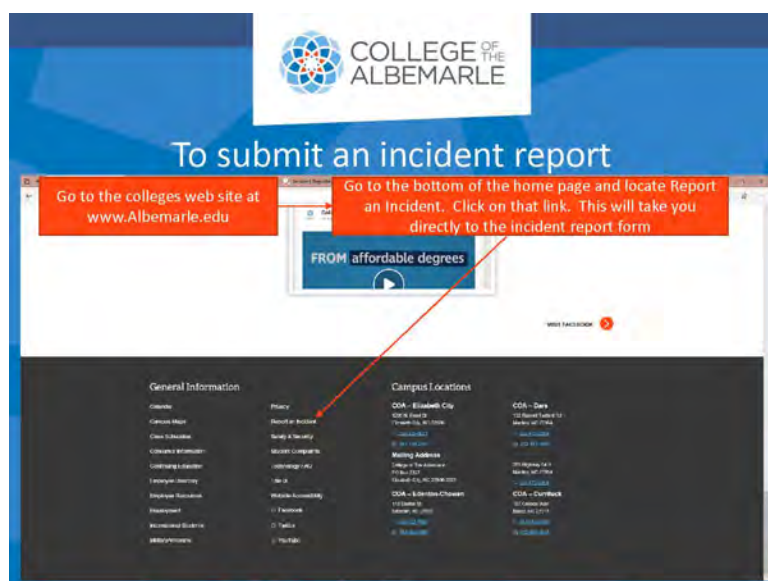
Reporting & Notification Procedures



Employees are to refer to the guidance outlined in this chart when reporting a positive or potential COVID-19 case for themselves. The College will respond with proper notification to the designated individual in the necessary departments listed.

Employees are expected to submit a copy of their test result. If tested on campus at COA, Robin Harris provides a copy to HR. Please attach results obtained from licensed outside sources to your MAXIENT report.

Further reporting will be captured in the College's incident reporting module: [MAXIENT](#). Please visit [this page](#) for additional information on reporting.



The screenshot shows the 'Incident Reporting Form' on the College of the Albemarle website. The form includes fields for 'Your full name', 'Your phone number', 'Your email address', 'Campus Address', 'Date of incident', and 'Location of incident'. There is also a section for 'Background Information' and a 'Submit' button.

When a positive case of COVID-19 has been reported to Human Resources via Maxient, the following will occur:

- The employee will receive an email or phone call of acknowledgment from Human Resources notifying them of their return date. The HR office will maintain the privacy of any health information gathered related to an employee's medical condition or their symptoms, and any such documentation will be kept in a private health folder with limited access by only HR staff.
- The employee will be advised that his/her self-disclosure is appreciated, that he/she will not be discriminated or retaliated against because of the diagnosis and that, while information about the diagnosis may be shared with others, the employee will not be identified by name.
- The employee's supervisor will be reminded to maintain the confidentiality of any such report so as to avoid any potential violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- When the employee and Director of Human Resources have identified the areas within the workplace that the employee had frequented during the incubation period, as well as co-workers they may have been in close contact with during the incubation period, Human Resources will ensure:
 - Each co-worker that has been identified as a close contact by the infected employee will be asked to follow the quarantine guidance as it applies to their vaccination status.
- HR will address the affected employee and any potential affected co-workers leave and/or telework options if available.
- Supervisors will be provided with the range of dates the employee will be absent and are encouraged to work out a telework schedule if the position allows.
- Employee will not be permitted to return to work until he/she has been free of symptoms for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) and 5 days have passed since a positive test result or cleared by a physician.



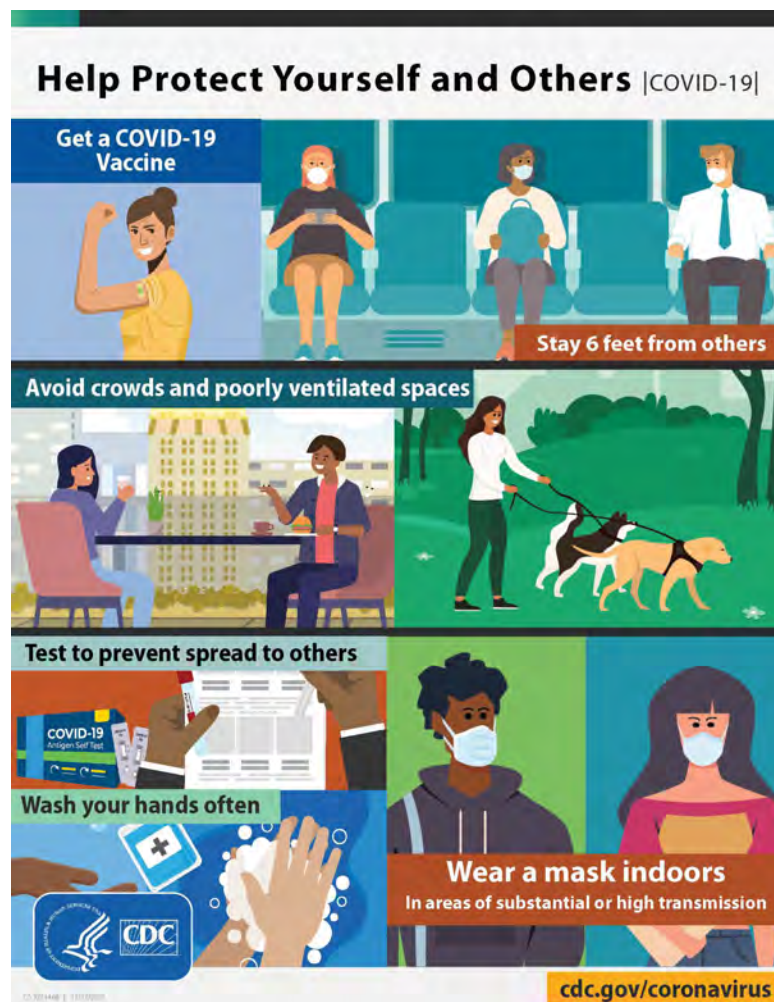
New Practices & Protocols on Campus

You will notice various changes in the way our workplaces look as well as new practices and protocols. As each of us adjusts to these changes, please know we are here to support you. Our goal is to collaboratively ensure you feel safe and secure.

- Flexible work schedules.
 - Access to our new employee assistance program (EAP).
 - Prominent signage concerning entry requirements, good hygiene, social distancing, pandemic symptoms, etc., will be posted throughout the buildings. Please adhere to the guidance on the signage and posters.
 - Communication to all employees will occur on a regular basis and through a variety of platforms concerning the following: status of the pandemic; available local, state, and national resources, campus access procedures, leave policy adjustments; and any other information deemed important to help employees navigate the current uncertain environment.
-
- Cleaning staff will disinfect the common areas on campus daily, focusing especially on doorknobs, light switches, and other frequently high- touched surfaces.
 - Disposable or cloth face masks/face coverings will be made available to all employees who wish to use one.

Reasonable Accommodations

Employees who have a disability under the ADA and are seeking reasonable accommodations will need to [submit a request via DocuSign](#) to begin the interactive process of approval.



Health & Safety Guidance

Personal Precautions & Safety Practices

Updated Masking Requirements

Effective March 7, 2022, COA will lift required masking restrictions and move to optional masking on all campuses. Employees are encouraged to use their best judgment in taking the appropriate precautions to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. We ask you to be supportive of your co-workers' choices if they elect to continue wearing a mask.



Important ways to make sure your mask works the best it can:

- Make sure your mask fits snugly against your face. Gaps can let air with respiratory droplets leak in and out around the edges of the mask.
- Pick a mask with layers to keep your respiratory droplets in and others' out. A mask with layers will stop more respiratory droplets getting inside your mask or escaping from your mask if you are sick.
- CDC's [mask recommendations](#) provide information that people can use to improve how well their masks protect them.

Additional On-Campus Resources:

- Testing is available in the Health Sciences building on COA-Elizabeth City. These are provided at no-cost to employees and their immediate, household, family members. Please contact Robin Harris to schedule an appointment.
- We will continue to schedule vaccination clinics with our local service providers to offer initial series and booster doses to all employees. Information on these clinics will be shared via email.

General Resources

- Elizabeth City State University has opened its complimentary COVID-19 testing to employees on Wednesdays. Appointments are not necessary for this resource.
- Free rapid testing kits for personal, at home use, are available via mail order from the following agencies:
 - [United States Postal Service](#)
 - [NC Department of Health & Human Services](#)

Personal Safety Best Practices continued:

- Wait at least six feet apart when standing in line.
- Wash your hands frequently, and for at least 20 seconds with soap and water.
- Employees should disinfect their personal workstations at the start and end of the workday.
 - All shared equipment and collaboration tools and technology (touchpads, conference phones, laptop plug-ins, etc.) and similar equipment should be cleaned by employees after each use.
 - Please adhere to the best practices guide for cleaning electronics.
 - Submit a ticket request to Campus Facility for needed cleaning supplies.
- Please stay home or go home if you are sick and notify your supervisor and HR.
- Cover your nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing.
- Replace handshakes with head nods and waves.
- Avoid using other employees' phones, desk, offices or other work tools and equipment, when possible.
- During the pandemic, because social distancing cannot be observed in a private vehicle, if two or more employees are attending a meeting off campus at the same location, they must drive separately. Refer to the [CDC guidance on protective measures while sharing personal vehicles and travel recommendations](#) if applicable.
- Call, email, message, or video conference as much as possible rather than meet face-to-face.
- Be conscious and understanding of your co-workers who may be dealing with child care issues, illness or loss of loved ones, and other concerns.
- Be kind. Understand that this is a stressful time for everyone, and an extra bit of kindness right now can go a long way.
- Follow all COA's policies, new protocols and practices.

Social Distancing

- Social distancing is important for everyone, especially to help protect people who are at higher risk of getting sick. Keeping space between you and others is one of the best tools we have in preventing the spread of COVID-19. Since people can spread the virus before they know they are sick, it is important to distance from others even if you are not displaying any symptoms. Social Distancing practices must be maintained at all times while on Campus. To practice social or physical distancing:
 - Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.
 - Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings.
 - Only one person on the elevator at a time, unless needed for assistance.
 - Employees should be aware of posted occupancy limits outside of each common area, including restrooms.
 - Access to some common areas such as lounges and vending machines could be limited for a while.

Mental & Emotional Well-being

New Employee Assistance Program Services

The College has recently contracted with the McLaughlin Group to provide EAP services for all full-time employees. Should you need assistance from professional counselors with personal or work-related challenges, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is just a phone call away.





- EAP is COA's sponsored benefit that offers employees support and resources to address personal or work-related challenges and concerns.
- EAP can help employees who have never needed support deal with the uncertainty of increased anxiety and isolation this pandemic has brought. EAP can help employees maintain perspective.
- EAP can assist our employees with managing stress while dealing with home schooling and caring for sick and elderly parents or other family members.
- It's confidential and free to you and your household family members. Employees are encouraged to use the short-term services of EAP as a check-in with a trained listener who can help to provide you with an ear to be able to feel reconnected and understand the normal and natural reactions that you may be experiencing.
- EAP can help those employees who are experiencing strong reactions to the pandemic or who already have symptoms of depression or anxiety. EAP counselors can provide methods for coping and referrals when needed to longer term counselors or psychiatrists who are covered by our health insurance. Employees will be able to obtain longer term counseling, if required.
- EAP resources are also available at www.mygroup.com then click on My portal Login 24/7/365 or by calling 800-633-3353.

Examples of concerns that the EAP addresses include:

- Family and relationship issues
- Depression and anxiety
- Resilience and coping skills
- Stress
- Work-related issues
- Alcohol or drug use
- Legal and financial planning/issues

Employees may access login information through the [shared drive](#).

Employees should contact the HR Office if you are experiencing problems accessing the new EAP Services.

College of The Albemarle CARES

We are committed to supporting your overall health and well-being. Our College of The Albemarle PLT members are here to assist you. Please direct your requests and questions to coa_hr@albemarle.edu.



Resources & Reference Documents

Resources

Coronavirus Self-Checker

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/coronavirus-self-checker.html>

CDC Guidelines for Prevention of COVID-19,

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

COVID-19 Community Level

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>

Albemarle Regional Health Services

<http://www.arhs-nc.org/>

Dare County Health and Human Services

<https://www.darenc.com/departments/health-human-services>

Employee Assistance Program

www.mygroup.com

Reference Documents

North Carolina Community College System COVID-19 Response

<https://www.nccommunitycolleges.edu/covid-19-response>

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services – Testing Information

<https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/about-covid-19/testing>

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services – Find My Testing Place

<https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/about-covid-19/testing/find-my-testing-place>

University of North Carolina System – COVID-19 Return to On-Site Work Guidance: Faculty and Staff

<https://www.ecsu.edu/vikingcompass/faculty-staffguidance.pdf>

Document Updates

June 1, 2020

- first issued

June 9, 2020

- revised to include new document format

July 1, 2020

- revised to include specific workplace scenarios and expanded information for employees

July 29, 2020

- phased re-entry table updated to reflect Governor's pause in Phase 2

August 6, 2020

- phased re-entry table updated to reflect Governor's extended pause in Phase 2
- time allocations for returning to work and isolation/quarantine revised to reflect updated CDC guidance
- reporting procedures guidance added

August 10, 2020

- revised workplace scenarios guidance in line with CDC recommendations
- links for CDC guidance on protective measures while ride sharing

September 1, 2020

- updated to align with the Governor's Phase 2.5

October 1, 2020

- updated to align with the Governor's Phase 3

October 21, 2020

- updated to align with the Governor's pause in Phase 3

October 28, 2020

- updated to reflect new CDC guidance as it relates to the definition of "close contact"
- additional FFCRA information as it applies to school re-openings
- expanded scenarios regarding close contact with positive individuals
- close contact added to list of definitions
- updates to meeting capacity in COA facilities and rooms

November 11, 2020

- timetable updated to reflect extended pause in Phase 3
- COA "Phase 4" & Return to Regular Schedule are "To Be Determined"

November 24, 2020

- Timetable updated to reflect extended pause in Phase 3 (until 12. 11. 2020)

December 1, 2020

- Updates to mask requirements per Executive Order #180.

January 6, 2021

- Phased re-entry table updated to reflect Governor's continued pause in Phase 3
- Removal of expired FFCRA paid leave provision information

March 4, 2021

- Updated CDC guidance
- Updated reduced quarantine guidance
- Updated COA's Phased Re-Entry Time Table
- Updated Vaccine Information

March 15, 2021

- Flexible Summer Schedule information added

April 30, 2021

- Changes to mask mandate to reflect new Executive Order #208

May 18, 2021

- Updates to mask/gathering mandates and telework provisions

June 15, 2021

- Updates to CDC recommendations on masks

August 9, 2021

- Updates to COA mask protocol and CDC guidance on vaccine status

January 12, 2022

- Updates to quarantine, isolation and testing guidance.
- Removal of scenarios.
- Quarantine guidance flow chart added.
- Vaccination and booster information added.
- Updated links and general order revision.

February 28, 2022

- Mask optional policy added
- Removal of mask examples
- Updated CDC information and links
- COVID-19 testing and home test order information added