

Hello Colleagues:

There have been quite a few communications that have gone out over the past few weeks, and we thought it would be helpful to send a condensed message to serve as a summary of the current key highlights regarding COVID-19 preventative requirements for faculty and staff at MCLA. For more detailed information please visit the [COVID-19 information landing page](#). Your health and safety, as well as the well-being of our campus and host communities, continues to be our top priority.

Vaccination Requirements:

A COVID-19 vaccination requirement is now in place with all three collective bargaining units (AFSCME, APA, MSCA Day Contract) and our non-unit employees. Thank you for your responsiveness.

Mask Requirement:

All MCLA community members, regardless of vaccination status, must wear a mask or cloth face covering over their mouth and nose (complying with [CDC guidelines](#)) in non-private spaces inside campus buildings or indoor facilities and on college transportation. Masks are available across campus for people who have forgotten or lost their masks, or whose masks have been damaged. Please contact Carrie Schadler in the President's Office at ext. 5201 if you need more masks in your location.

Anyone seeking an exemption from the mask requirement policy due to medical reasons should seek accommodation through MCLA's ADA process by contacting Human Resources. Faculty and staff should work with their Department Chair or direct supervisor if they need resources to overcome challenges relative to providing instruction or carrying out job responsibilities while wearing a mask.

COVID-19 Testing:

Employee asymptomatic testing began the first week of classes. Like last year, employees are eligible for a weekly free COVID-19 test at Health Services. This semester's employee testing appointments are offered on a walk-in basis, located at Health Services, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Stay tuned, as the location may change for the colder months.

Employees with COVID-19 symptoms should not report to work and should contact their primary care provider and/or the Berkshire Health Systems COVID-19 Hotline for testing guidelines and additional information (855-262-5465). The Hotline is open seven days a week from 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. If the Hotline instructs the employee to test and quarantine, the employee must notify Human Resources. Please do not test on campus if you are feeling ill. We are also in the process of ramping up student surveillance testing, moving to a larger percentage of students tested weekly (residents and commuters), as we begin to spend more time indoors. Students will be notified over the coming weeks.

Student Quarantine and Isolation Protocols

Below outlines our current isolation and quarantine protocols for students. It has come to our attention that there have been students informing individual faculty members that they have a need to quarantine and/or may be in isolation. **The Center for Student Success & Engagement will officially notify faculty members with a list of students currently in quarantine or isolation.** This list is considered the official quarantine and isolation list of students who are receiving excused absences and should be offered accommodations as outlined below. If a student sends an email and you have not received notification from CSSE, please direct that student to Health Services for guidance.

For reference, we have included the updated quarantine and isolation processes we are following for students. The protocols below were developed in consultation with our local Department of Public Health contacts and MCLA's Health Services staff, in alignment with the latest state and federal guidance.

Vaccinated Students:

- If a vaccinated student tests positive for COVID-19, they will need to isolate for 10 days.
- If a vaccinated student has had close contact with a person who has tested positive for COVID-19, the below applies:
 - No initial test or quarantine needed.
 - Self-monitor for symptoms and test if symptoms develop.
 - Testing should occur on the 5th day from the initial contact due to COVID-19 Delta variant incubation period.
 - Continue to self-monitor for symptoms until day 14.

Unvaccinated Students:

- If an unvaccinated student has close contact with any person who tests positive for COVID-19, they will need to do the following:
 - Day 1- take a test.
 - Day 5- take a test.
 - Day 8- If both tests have returned negative results, and the student is still showing no symptoms, they are deemed cleared.
 - Days 9-14- Continue to self-monitor for symptoms.
- If an unvaccinated student has close contact with any person who tests positive for COVID-19 and **develops symptoms**, they will need to quarantine immediately and then do the following:
 - Test on any day symptoms start and then again on day 5.
 - If symptoms have resolved **and** the day 5 test is negative, they will continue to quarantine until day 8 as long no further symptoms occur. They would need to continue to monitor for 14 days for symptoms.

- If symptoms are unresolved by day 8, and the student has had negative test results, they will be tested one more time before they are cleared.

[MCLA's COVID-19 dashboard](#) is posted again for the semester and will be updated every Friday morning to align with state and local reporting that is released on Thursday evenings. The dashboard tracks our test results through our partnership with the Broad Institute, as well as cases reported through other agencies.

Our shared goal is to provide an in-person learning experience in a community that is as safe as possible for everyone. All students, staff, and faculty have a part in achieving this goal. As we continue to combat the pandemic, we are adopting these policies because they are the best way to protect ourselves and our community against the COVID-19 virus. Thank you for your vigilance.

The MCLA hotline is also available from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday - Friday for questions related to COVID-19 at 413-662-5550. You can also reach out to me directly with any questions.

Sincerely,

Gina

Gina Puc

Vice President for Strategic Initiatives

Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts

375 Church Street

North Adams, MA 01247

413-662-5428

[MCLA COVID-19 Information](#)

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