

## **Guidelines for CUNY Fall 2021 Reopening Where Not Everyone is Fully Vaccinated**

For Fall 2021 CUNY will have a mixed population of students, staff and faculty that are fully vaccinated and not fully vaccinated. This situation requires decision making to protect the people who are not fully vaccinated. The [CDC guidance](#) identifies four factors that inform the optimal implementation of layered prevention strategies.

1. The level of community transmission of COVID-19
  - a. The current level of community transmission of COVID-19 is the lowest it has been since the beginning of the pandemic and New York State has the lowest test positivity rate in the country.
2. COVID-19 vaccination coverage, including among students, faculty, and staff
  - a. New York has reached a threshold where 70% of the eligible population has received at least one dose of the vaccine. It can be expected that the CUNY population will exceed 70% vaccination rates by Fall 2021. This expectation is predicated on the fact that vaccinations will be mandatory for students returning to in-person learning, and while staff and faculty will not be required to be vaccinated, their demographics and education levels would indicate a higher uptake of vaccinations compared to the general population.
3. Implementation of a robust, frequent SARS-CoV-2 screening testing program with high participation from the unvaccinated campus population
  - a. CUNY will implement an asymptomatic, surveillance screening testing program for unvaccinated populations.
4. Any local COVID-19 outbreaks or increasing trends
  - a. Due to high vaccination rates and low levels of community spread, the risk of a localized outbreak is extremely low.

Considering all of these factors together, CUNY is in a particularly low-risk environment for reopening for the Fall 2021 semester, which has informed CUNY's approach to the following layered implementation strategies.

### **Recommended Prevention Strategies that Reduce Spread**

CDC recommends the removal of constraints for vaccinated individuals, and continues to recommend constraints for unvaccinated individuals. Students who plan to return to campus in the fall will be required to be vaccinated, pending full FDA approval of the vaccines. Participation in on-campus activities will require either proof of vaccination or participation in a weekly testing protocol, with no positive results. CUNY is developing a mechanism for monitoring on-going compliance. The CDC recommends a mix of the following prevention strategies to reduce spread and protect unvaccinated populations on campuses. Based on the factors above, which indicate a low-risk spread of disease for the CUNY community, CUNY will rely on a less stringent implementation of these prevention strategies as described below.

### **Offering and promoting vaccination**

CUNY has and will continue to strongly promote the vaccine. Campuses will continue to promote the University's #VaxUpCUNY campaign, a multifaceted, multimedia campaign to encourage CUNY students,

alumni, faculty and staff to get their COVID-19 vaccination as soon as they become eligible. The campaign is a critical strategy for easing anxiety for those that may be hesitant to vaccinations.

## Masks

- **Indoors:** People who are not fully vaccinated and those who might need to take extra precautions must wear a mask indoors at all times. Unvaccinated members of the CUNY community (students, staff, faculty, visitors, etc.) will be asked to observe the honor system in complying with this requirement.
  - Acceptable face coverings are required for all unvaccinated individuals who are over the age of two and able to medically tolerate such coverings.
  - Acceptable face coverings for COVID-19 prevention include but are not limited to cloth-based face coverings (e.g. homemade sewn, quick cut, bandana), surgical masks, N95 respirators, and face shields that cover both the mouth and nose.
  - However, cloth, disposable, or other homemade face coverings are not acceptable for workplace activities that typically require a higher degree of personal protective equipment (PPE) due to the nature of the work. For those activities, N95 respirators or other PPE used under existing industry standards must continue to be used, as is defined in accordance with OSHA guidelines.
  - This provision should not be construed to require physical distancing among roommates or require face coverings to be worn while inside an individual's residence. For the purposes of this guidance, students who share the same residence (i.e., dormitory room) should be considered members of the same household.
  - Campuses will have an adequate supply of face coverings, masks and other required PPE on hand should an employee need a replacement.
  - Campuses must allow individuals to use their own acceptable face coverings but cannot require employees to supply their own face coverings. Further, this guidance shall not prevent employees from wearing their personally owned protective coverings as long as they abide by the minimum standards of protection for the specific activity. The campus may require employees to wear more protective PPE due to the nature of their work. Employers must comply with all applicable OSHA standards.
  - Campuses must train employees on how to adequately put on, take off, clean (as applicable), and discard PPE, including but not limited to, appropriate face coverings. Such training should be extended to contractors if campus will be supplying the contractors with PPE. See CDC [guidance](#) for information. CDC videos such as the following can be used for such training purposes: [Instructions on donning appropriate PPE](#).
  - The NYC Department of Health has issued updated guidance on face coverings which recommend that people over the age of two-years-old wear snug fitting masks with two or three layers of material to better prevent unfiltered air from passing through; or wear two masks, with a cloth face covering over a disposable mask. The guidance also suggests higher grade masks, like KN95s, for people at greater risk (see: <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/imm/covid-19-face-covering-faq.pdf>).
- **Outdoors:** In general, people do not need to wear masks when outdoors. However, particularly in areas of substantial to high transmission, CDC recommends that people who are not fully vaccinated wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained

close contact with other people who are not fully vaccinated. In those situations, unvaccinated members of the community should follow the mask requirements outlined above.

## **Physical Distancing**

Physical distancing means keeping space of at least 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) between people who are not from your household in both indoor and outdoor spaces.

For the vast majority of students who are expected to be vaccinated by Fall 2021, physical distancing will not be a required safety measure for classroom and educational settings. People who are not fully vaccinated should continue to practice physical distancing.

Per NYS guidelines, in situations or settings of more than 5,000 participants with guests of unknown, or mixed vaccination status, the state's COVID-19 restrictions remain in effect. CUNY campuses can choose whether to keep physical distancing measures in place or operate separate areas for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals. In other campus events with less than 5,000 participants but still with a significant number of guests of unknown or mixed vaccination status, the campus can decide whether to require social distancing, or other protocols, for unvaccinated individuals.

## **Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**

CUNY will continue to facilitate health-promoting behaviors such as hand washing and respiratory hygiene/cough etiquette to reduce the spread of infectious illnesses including COVID-19. Provide frequent reminders of proper hand hygiene (verbally, posters, videos) with hand sanitizer widely available in common areas and rooms. Campuses should maintain hand hygiene stations around the institution, as follows:

- For handwashing: soap, running warm water, disposable paper towels, and a lined garbage can.
- For hand sanitizing: an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol for areas where handwashing facilities may not be available or practical.
- Make hand sanitizer available throughout common areas. It will be placed in convenient locations, such as at building entrances, and exits. Touch-free hand sanitizer dispensers should be installed where possible.
  - Campuses should remind individuals that alcohol-based hand sanitizers can be flammable and may not be suitable for certain areas of a campus
- Campuses should place signage near hand sanitizer stations indicating that visibly soiled hands should be washed with soap and water; hand sanitizer is not effective on visibly soiled hands.
- Campuses will recommend and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Campuses will place receptacles around the institution for disposal of soiled items, including paper towels and PPE.
- Campuses will consider providing disposable wipes to staff and faculty so that commonly used surfaces (e.g., keyboards, desks, remote controls) can be wiped down before and after use.

## **Housing and Communal Spaces**

Given that vaccines will be mandatory for students living in campus housing, housing and dorms will resume normal operations with 100% of occupants fully vaccinated. Unvaccinated students may not live in campus housing.

## Contact Tracing

CUNY will continue to aid in the identification of exposures, and notify close contacts, as appropriate, of exposure as soon as possible after being notified that someone in the campus has tested positive or been diagnosed with COVID-19. Guidelines for contact tracing apply:

- If a worker or visitor was in close or proximate contact with others at a location and tests positive for COVID, immediately notify and cooperate with New York State and City health departments with contact tracing efforts, including notification of potential contacts, such as workers, visitors and/or customers (if known) who had close or proximate contact with the individual, while maintaining confidentiality required.
- In the case of an individual testing positive, campuses must develop plans with local health departments to trace all contacts of the individual in accordance with protocols, training, and tools provided through the New York State Contact Tracing Program. Confidentiality must be maintained as required by federal and state law and regulations. Campuses must cooperate with state and local health department contact tracing, isolation, and quarantine efforts.
  - Campuses should partner with local health departments to train staff and students to undertake contact tracing efforts for on-campus populations.
- State and Local health departments will implement monitoring and movement restrictions of infected or exposed persons.
- Campuses must ensure that reporting plans are in place for individuals who are alerted that they have come into close or proximate contact with a person with COVID-19, and have been alerted to such exposure via tracing, tracking or other mechanism. The CDC-issued guidance on how to manage reporting can be found here: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/contact-tracing/contact-tracing-plan/data-management.html>
- Through the New York State Contact Tracing Program, inform those who have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home or in their living quarters and self-monitor for symptoms, and follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop. Vaccinated individuals do not have to self-quarantine.
  - Through the New York State Contact Tracing Program, contact will be made with the individual to identify all members of the community who were in close contact during the time that the individual would have been contagious. The NYS Department of Health considers a close contact to be someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 10 minutes starting from 48 hours before illness onset until the time the person was isolated (see: [https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/06/doh\\_covid19\\_publicpriv\\_atemployeereturntowork\\_053120.pdf](https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2020/06/doh_covid19_publicpriv_atemployeereturntowork_053120.pdf)).
  - Through the New York State Contact Tracing Program, outreach to all close contacts will be made; unvaccinated individuals will be notified that they are required to self-quarantine.

## Isolation and Quarantine

CUNY will continue to require that unvaccinated individuals enter quarantine in the event of possible exposure, and isolation should be required for all individuals when diagnosed with COVID-19. Unless showing symptoms of COVID-19, vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine in the event of possible exposure to someone who has a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.

#### Quarantine Guidelines for Dormitories:

- In consultation with the local health department, campuses with dormitories must identify where students who are infected with COVID-19 will be residing and how daily needs, such as food and medication, will be met if it becomes necessary to have a period of isolation or quarantine.

Recommended facilities include, but are not limited to:

- Sections of residence halls with private bathrooms, if possible, should be reserved to be used solely for the purpose of isolating or quarantining individuals living on-campus who have, who are suspected to have COVID-19;
  - Nearby hotels that are arranged to accommodate individuals who have, or are suspected to have COVID-19; and/or
  - Individual homes, as long as the student is able to safely travel home (e.g. not using mass transit) and their home is safe for them to isolate away from other individuals.
- Physical Preparation:
    - The isolation and quarantine rooms should be physically separated from other residential student rooms.
    - The rooms should have private/separate bathroom facilities and be stocked with a thermometer, sanitizing wipes, tissues, soap, hand sanitizer, and toiletries.
    - Spaces should be labeled externally with appropriate signage that states restricted access (e.g., “Private Quarters” or “Authorized Personnel Only”) but does not state the reason for the restricted access due to concerns about potential for stigma and FERPA/HIPAA violations. Any signage decisions should be reviewed with the campus or University general counsel.
    - Adequate numbers of rooms should be pre-identified to accommodate an increase in need. CDC may later provide guidance on adequate numbers of rooms.
  - Operational Preparation:
    - If a residential student contracts COVID-19, campuses must proactively identify appropriate residential spaces and reserve those spaces in the event of needed isolation or quarantine of a student(s).
    - Campus leaders will consult with CUNY Central and health officials to run scenarios on transmission and ensure enough space is set aside to isolate all cases and suspected cases in an aggressive transmission scenario.
    - A protocol should be made available to all individuals involved in the management of isolation spaces and its procedures.
    - Minimally, a select group of individuals within housing/residence life, campus safety, and facilities should be aware of the rooms used for isolation.
    - Student health services staff should remotely monitor students on a daily basis (temperature checks and symptom screening) and transfer to an on- or off- campus site for a clinical evaluation if symptoms advance or the patient requests.
    - For students on the campus meal plan, dining services should arrange food delivery in collaboration with housing/residence life staff. Student affairs or campus life, in collaboration with housing/residence life staff, could arrange for the purchase of a campus meal plan or coordinate meal delivery for those students who have not purchased the campus meal plan.

- Transportation should be made available to and from the location if medical care is needed.
- For residential campuses, case management of all persons with COVID-19 symptoms and/or diagnosis and all persons under quarantine, must include placement in isolation/quarantine housing for 10 days, psychological support, support for basic needs, and ongoing monitoring while isolated.
- Employees can return to work after 10 days with a negative test result or, if a negative result cannot be achieved, then appropriate medical clearance to return to work. This documentation must be dated no earlier than 3 days prior to the anticipated return to work date. This requirement applies to all quarantines including symptoms, positive test and exposure.

### **Metrics and Early Warning:**

Campuses should monitor NYS COVID-19 infection rate metrics and local testing metrics that will determine the need to scale back or shut down campus operations. Campuses should have a plan to detect early warnings of an infection surge and a shutdown plan in place to respond rapidly.

### **Testing**

CUNY will implement surveillance testing for unvaccinated individuals, who will be required to submit a test every 7 days. Continued access to on-campus activities will be contingent on regular submission of a negative test.

- Surveillance testing is intended to identify infected people who are asymptomatic. Surveillance helps to identify unknown cases so that measures can be taken to prevent further transmission.
- Fully vaccinated people with no COVID-19-like symptoms and no known exposure will be exempted from routine screening testing programs.

In the fall, vaccination becomes a requirement for students pending full-approval of the vaccines by the FDA. Those who are not fully vaccinated or who do not disclose their vaccination status will be required to submit a weekly COVID-19 surveillance test and wear face coverings, and may possibly need to adhere to additional requirements aimed at keeping the CUNY community safe. Regular testing will not be required for those who are fully vaccinated.

Additional information on a CUNY-wide surveillance testing protocol for faculty, staff and students without a confirmed vaccination status will be available on CUNY's COVID website shortly.

### **Symptom Screening**

Based on CDC guidance, CUNY will stop entry screening (Everbridge self-reporting) and rely on individuals to stay home when they are sick.

### **General Guidelines for Healthy Facilities**

CUNY will maintain many approaches adopted during the pandemic to limit the spread of communicable disease. These include: regular and enhanced cleaning, safe disinfection, improved ventilation and maintaining healthy facilities.

#### **Cleaning and Disinfection**

- Campuses must ensure adherence to hygiene and cleaning and disinfection requirements as advised by the CDC and NYSDOH, including "[Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public](#)

[and Private Facilities for COVID-19](#),” and the “[STOP THE SPREAD](#)” poster, as applicable.

Campuses must maintain logs that include the date, time, and scope of cleaning and disinfection. Campuses must identify cleaning and disinfection frequency for each facility type and assign responsibility.

- The head of campus facilities (or position designated by the Coronavirus Campus Coordinator) will establish the log, perhaps online, with the required information and instruct housekeeping staff to complete an entry after each cleaning and disinfection activity. The head of campus facilities will determine cleaning regimens for specific spaces and to establish a frequency schedule for each facility type and the housekeeping team assigned to the task. The head of campus facilities will report to the Coronavirus Campus Coordinator regularly on the status of the cleaning regimen and the log.
- Campuses may choose to provide appropriate cleaning and disinfection supplies for shared and frequently touched surfaces for employees and encourage their employees (or cleaning staffs) to use these supplies following manufacturer’s instructions for use before and after use of these surfaces, followed by hand hygiene. Campuses may provide such supplies for others.
  - To reduce the number of high-touch surfaces, campuses should install touch-free amenities such as water fountains, trashcans, and paper towel dispensers. If installing touch-free amenities is not feasible, campuses will at a minimum, make hand sanitizer available near high touch surfaces (e.g. trash receptacles, paper towel dispensers).
  - Occupants of the campus will be vested with the responsibility for cleaning their own work areas. Campuses will provide workspaces with single use disinfecting wipes and/or multi-surface spray cleaners to support self-servicing of touch points. For college-owned vehicles, drivers should clean and disinfect high touch points on and in vehicles before and after each use. Disinfecting supplies will be stored in each vehicle.
- Campuses must conduct regular cleaning and disinfection of the facilities and more frequent cleaning and disinfection for high risk areas used by many individuals and for frequently touched surfaces. Cleaning and disinfection must be rigorous and ongoing and will occur at least daily, or more frequently as needed. Please refer to NYSDOH’s “[Interim Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfection of Public and Private Facilities for COVID-19](#)” for detailed instructions on how to clean and disinfect facilities.
- Ensure that materials and tools used by employees are regularly cleaned and disinfected using registered disinfectants. Refer to the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) list of products registered in New York State and identified by the EPA as effective against COVID-19. If cleaning or disinfecting products or the act of cleaning and disinfecting causes safety hazards or degrades the material or machinery, campuses must put in place hand hygiene stations between use and/or supply disposable gloves and/or limitations on the number of employees using such machinery.
- Campuses must ensure regular cleaning and disinfection of restrooms. Restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected more often depending on frequency of use.
- Campuses are expected to follow CDC guidelines on “[Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)” if someone is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19:
  - Campuses do not necessarily need to close operations, if they can close off the affected areas.
  - Close off areas used by the person who is sick, suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19.
  - Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area.

- Wait 24 hours before you clean and disinfect. If 24 hours is not feasible, wait as long as possible.
- Clean and disinfect all areas used by the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 who is sick, such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, and common areas.
- Once the area has been appropriately cleaned and disinfected, it can be reopened for use.
- Individuals without close or proximate contact with the person suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 can return to the work in the area or resume on-campus activities immediately after cleaning and disinfection.
- If more than seven days have passed since the person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 visited or used the facility, additional cleaning and disinfection is not necessary, but routine cleaning and disinfection will continue.
- Campuses must provide for the cleaning and disinfection of exposed areas in the event an individual is confirmed to have COVID-19, with such cleaning and disinfection to include, at a minimum, all heavy transit areas and high-touch surfaces (e.g., elevators, lobbies, building entrances, badge scanners, restrooms, handrails, door handles).
- Refer to NYSDOH's "[Interim Guidance for Public and Private Employees Returning to Work Following COVID-19 Infection or Exposure](#)" for information on "close and proximate" contacts.
  - If a worker or visitor was in close or proximate contact with others at the location and tests positive for COVID, immediately notify and cooperate with New York State and City health departments with contact tracing efforts, including notification of potential contacts, such as workers, visitors and/or customers (if known) who had close or proximate contact with the individual, while maintaining confidentiality required.
- Campuses should avoid use of furniture that is not easily cleaned and disinfected (e.g., cloth fabric sofas)
- Whenever possible, campuses will increase ventilation of outdoor air (e.g., opening windows and doors) while maintaining safety precautions.
  - Patios or outdoor spaces that allow for open air meetings could serve as a substitute for indoor meeting spaces, weather permitting.

**Additional guidance on ventilation and HVAC systems:**

- Where possible, campuses will ensure there is an adequate flow of fresh air to workspaces and optimize the ventilation system settings. Some ways to do this are:
  - Maximize fresh air through your ventilation system.
  - Ensure restrooms are under negative pressure.
  - Ensure that the proper filtration is being used for not only normal office use but also what is recommended to control COVID-19 transmission.
  - Clean and disinfect all HVAC intakes and returns daily. Consider seeking an HVAC professional and see American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) updates for more information.
  - Upgrade ventilation per OSHA guidance to remove aerial antigens.
- If fans such as pedestal, desk or hard mounted fans are used, take steps to minimize air from fans blowing from one person directly to another. NOTE: A desk fan is capable of creating an airflow that can still have an effect on smaller droplets. While the droplets might not spread as far via a desk fan, depending on the office configuration and fan direction, they can still spread to nearby individuals.



- If fans are disabled or removed, employers should remain aware of, and take steps to prevent, heat hazards.
- Consider maintaining HVAC system operation for maximum space occupancy to allow for maximum fresh air supply, regardless of reduced occupancy within the space.