

Dear Quincy University community:

Today's message is the 109th update on Quincy University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. **We are writing with another special update on the requirements in Illinois for mask mandates, COVID-19 testing, and vaccination.**

At the risk of oversimplification, colleges and universities in Illinois, including private universities like QU, have not received much recent attention or guidance from our state government on steps to prevent or slow the rate of COVID-19 infections. We have reviewed the guidance provided to K-12 schools and to other organizations to determine how that guidance is relevant to our students, faculty, staff, and others who visit the Quincy University campus. We also have had multiple conversations with public health professionals in Adams County and have taken notice of recent announcements by other universities in the state, including the University of Illinois system and Illinois State University. Finally, we now understand that, later today, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a federal agency, will announce new and more relaxed guidelines for mask use.

As a result of our own review, it is evident that QU can and should change its current mask guidance. At the same time, members of the QU community must comply with the law as we understand it, complicated as our understanding might be by the existence of multiple executive orders and court decisions.

Effective Monday, February 28, 2022, the following **revised masking policy** will take effect on the Quincy University campus:

- All students, faculty, and staff should **carry masks at all times** while on campus.
- **Close fitting cloth or disposable masks should be used at all times in indoor classrooms, laboratories, and other indoor learning spaces.** Exceptions to the classroom and lab requirement can be made only by the Vice President for Academic Affairs or the Vice President for Student Development. Faculty and staff are expected to cooperate to ensure compliance with this mandate from the State of Illinois.
- **Mask use in all other campus buildings and spaces is optional.** However, any QU employee may require that anyone entering the employee's campus office must use a mask while in that office.

- Those visiting campus will not be required to wear masks unless they are visiting classrooms or labs while courses are in session.
- All persons who wish to wear masks on campus should be permitted to do so without experiencing any sort of criticism or pressure to take off their masks.

Consistent with the executive orders issued last fall by the Governor, QU will **continue to conduct weekly COVID-19 tests** for all faculty, staff, and students who are not yet fully vaccinated.

COVID-19 vaccinations continue to be mandatory for all students, faculty, and staff at public and private universities in the State of Illinois. Those who are not yet fully vaccinated should consult with Dr. Tracy regarding their options for **deferring the vaccination decision** or for receiving a **medical or religious exemption** from vaccination. (“Full vaccination” is explained below.)

As always, new guidance or requirements for COVID-19 prevention may be announced at any time by the State of Illinois. QU will change its policies whenever required to do so as a result of new executive orders, legislation, or the relevant decisions of state courts.

Here’s our summary of the current COVID-19 situation for the Quincy University community:

1. Because of requirements first imposed in August 2021 by the Governor’s executive order, all colleges and universities in the state, including QU, require weekly COVID-19 testing for unvaccinated and partially vaccinated members of our community. These requirements have not been changed and are still in effect for the 2022 Spring Semester. **Note:** Until we are told otherwise, a person is considered fully vaccinated if that person has received the two-shot vaccination series of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine or the one-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine. A booster shot is not required for a person to be considered fully vaccinated, though we strongly recommend booster shots for all eligible members of our community.
2. **Since the beginning of the 2022 Spring Semester, QU is aware of 24 members of our community (students, faculty, and staff) who have tested positive for COVID-19.** Those 24 people who have had COVID-19 included both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals. One

of those 24 is currently an active case; the remaining 23 individuals have recovered and returned to normal activities.

3. **All unvaccinated or partially vaccinated students, faculty, and staff will continue to receive separate information about their weekly COVID-19 testing.** Please direct questions about this State of Illinois requirement for weekly testing to Dr. Tracy.

4. We know that some QU students have been required to participate in **COVID-19 surveillance testing provided through their local employers in Quincy or nearby communities.** We ask all students to report their test results to Dr. Tracy.

5. Faculty, staff, and business partner employees should continue to **seek out COVID-19 testing** when they have one or more COVID-19 symptoms. Those faculty, staff, and business partner employees seeking to arrange a rapid COVID-19 test on campus should contact Dr. Tracy directly

If you are a member of the QU community and have not read the previous update messages, you could search them out in your email folders or read them at <https://www.quincy.edu/coronavirus/>.

Local and State Reports on COVID-19 Cases

Effective October 31, 2021, **Adams County, Illinois**, no longer maintains a COVID-19 tracking dashboard. Information about COVID-19 cases in **Illinois** is available at <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/>. Information about COVID-19 in **Missouri** is available at <https://showmestrong.mo.gov/data/public-health/>.

Announcements

As a reminder, the people who are most at risk for serious illness from COVID-19 are unvaccinated, older, and might have one or more health problems already. **COVID-19 continues to be a dangerous disease, especially for the unvaccinated. Vaccination with a booster shot provides the greatest protection from serious illness.** We thank all those members of the QU community who have been fully vaccinated and have a booster shot.

Throughout the pandemic, Quincy University has received exceptional guidance and support from the professionals of the Department of Health in Adams County, Illinois. We are deeply grateful for their support of the university.

We ask all members of the Quincy University community to pray for peace, especially for peace in Ukraine.

Have a good weekend, Hawks.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian McGee, President

Dr. Christine Tracy, Vice President for Student Development