

February 8, 2022

Dear Quincy University community:

Today's message is the 108th update on Quincy University's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are writing today with a **special update** on recent events in Illinois. Last Friday, a judge in Springfield, Illinois, issued a **restraining order** that removed several state-imposed COVID-19 mandates for K-12 education, which were the result of executive orders previously signed by the Governor. As a result of Friday's restraining order, some Illinois elementary and high schools are now moving to *encouraging* mask use and COVID-19 testing, rather than *requiring* masks and testing. In other words, masks, for example, are currently optional for students and staff at Quincy High School and some other K-12 schools in the state.

The details relevant to this court order are complicated, and the previous paragraph is not a complete summary of the judge's order. What is clear, however, is that the judge's order *does not apply* to public or private universities and *is not directly relevant* to Quincy University. **QU will continue to comply with the Governor's executive order until the order is removed by the Governor or a court prevents the enforcement of the order.**

In the event the Governor's executive order for higher education is lifted or is no longer enforceable, Quincy University would announce its own COVID-19 policies for the safety of our community. For now, **here's the bottom line**: You need to **keep wearing masks** inside Quincy University buildings. If you are not fully vaccinated, you will need to **keep testing** each week. And, if you are positive for COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone who is positive, Dr. Tracy will give you **quarantine instructions**.

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 23 members of our community (students, faculty, and staff) who have tested positive for COVID-19.** Those 23 people who have had COVID-19 included both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals. Four of those 23 are currently active cases; the remaining 19 individuals have recovered and returned to normal activities. No one currently is in quarantine on the QU campus.

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**

As background for our safety measures at QU, we continue to report local and statewide COVID-19 information to all members of our community. QU updates on COVID-19 cases are taken from the public reports of state and county agencies.

Effective October 31, 2021, **Adams County, Illinois**, no longer maintains a COVID-19 tracking dashboard. Information about COVID-19 cases in **Illinois**, including county-by-county reports, is available at <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/>. As of February 8, 2022, the state of Illinois lists 194 deaths attributable to COVID-19 in Adams County, dating to the beginning of the pandemic.

**Missouri** reports its COVID-19 cases for the past seven days and does not provide daily updates to its COVID-19 summary. 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, include those who received their booster shot yesterday on the QU campus.

In social settings, especially when you are not on the QU campus, **physical distancing** can be helpful in preventing the spread of COVID-19. Remaining at least three feet apart is a good idea. Six feet of separation from other people is even better.

Finally, COVID-19 has had many effects on the QU community, our region, and the nation. Many of you are aware that inflation has made the things we buy much more expensive. Nationally, **inflation has increased by 7%** in the past year, and QU has seen prices for many of the things we have to buy go up by **10% or more**.

While QU did not increase **tuition or fees** last year, we will increase tuition next year by 2.49%, with similar increases for residential charges. There will also be changes in some (but not all) fees, with details posted on our website later this semester. A 2.49% tuition increase will *not* cover our increased expenses from inflation, and we at QU will have to work very hard to manage expenses for next year. We are committed to preserving the great quality of a Quincy University education, while keeping a QU education affordable.

President McGee promises the campus squirrels will not benefit in any way from the increase in tuition and fees.

Have a great February, Hawks.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian McGee, President

Dr. Christine Tracy, Vice President for Student Development