

Dear Quincy University community:

Happy Friday, Hawks. The big COVID-19 news of the day concerns **yesterday's Executive Order** from Governor Pritzker of the State of Illinois, which covered both mask usage and vaccinations. If you are most interested in that news, you can **skip down to the Announcements** section.

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

Here's our review of the COVID-19 situation for the Quincy University community:

1. Our last round of surveillance testing, involving 79 unvaccinated students, was reported to you in an email message on Wednesday, August 25, with no positive test results. Our next student surveillance testing for unvaccinated students will take place on Wednesday, September 1.
2. **Four students have tested positive for COVID-19 since the semester began.** Any student with an active infection is quarantined, whether on or off campus.
3. In the typical day QU is testing three or more students, faculty, and staff for COVID-19 because those community members report one or more COVID-19 symptoms, such as a headache or congestion. Most test results for such symptomatic testing are negative, but not all.
4. We are continuing to get new information about student, faculty, business partner, and staff vaccinations. We are still updating our information, so we will give a specific update early next week on our vaccination progress.
5. We know that some QU students may be 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.
6. For the current semester, we are aware of **no COVID-19 cases for QU faculty. So far this semester, two full-time staff members and one part-time staff member have tested positive for COVID-19.** Anyone with an active infection is quarantined, and no one in off-campus quarantine is permitted to return to campus until that person's quarantine period is complete.
7. 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.
8. By far, the best way to reduce our risk for COVID-19 infection and serious illness is vaccination. **Masking, distancing, and good hand**

hygiene also can be important ways to reduce risk. All members of the QU community should continue to follow public health safety guidelines.

9. For any student currently living on the QU campus and for all employees, it is essential that students, faculty, and staff **report symptoms** of anything that might be COVID-19 as soon as possible. While some of us might be tempted to avoid reporting a symptom on the grounds that the symptom seems minor, a healthcare professional, not an individual student or employee, should make this determination. **There is *no* acceptable reason for failing to inform us about a medical symptom that might point to COVID-19.**

10. **If you intend for any reason to have a COVID-19 test** or you have taken a COVID-19 test not arranged by the university, no matter where you are living right now, **please contact Dr. Tracy** with the details of your situation.

11. New guidance regarding COVID-19 testing, safety, and quarantine protocols continues to be announced by federal, state, and county sources. Updates to our policies and procedures will be announced by email as those updates are available.

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. We continue to provide active case counts and current hospitalizations in most of these email updates. In the **Quincy region (i.e., Adams County)**, 69 new cases have been reported today. There are 43 current hospitalizations in Adams County linked to COVID-19. Since the beginning of the pandemic, one Missouri resident has died in Adams County of causes related to COVID-19, as have 137 Adams County residents.

Information about COVID-19 cases in Illinois, including county-by-county reports, is available at <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/coronavirus/Pages/default.aspx>. QU updates on COVID-19 cases are taken from the public reports of state and county agencies.

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

On August 26, Governor Pritzker of Illinois announced a new Executive Order relevant to facemasks and vaccinations, including vaccination of students, employees, and volunteers at all public and private universities in Illinois. If you would like to read this rather lengthy executive order, please see <https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/resources/executive-orders/display.executive-order-number-20.2021.html>.

As we indicated in yesterday's email update, there will be a **state-ordered facemask mandate** on the QU campus for all public indoor spaces, beginning at **8:00 a.m. on Monday, August 30**, 2021. New signs calling attention to the mask mandate will be posted on building entrances by midday on Monday. The mask mandate applies to all members of our community, including visitors, whether they are vaccinated or not. There are very few exceptions to this mandate, other than eating, drinking, and bathing. Most activities in the HFC, including use of workout equipment, will require masking. Please pay attention to the signs in the HFC for details on mask use in that building. Faculty, staff, business partners, and volunteers may direct their masking questions to their deans or supervisors.

Facemasks are NOT required when outdoors on the QU campus, though community members are welcome to mask in crowded outdoor spaces.

In addition to the new state facemask mandate, you may have heard or read that **full COVID-19 vaccination** is now required at all public and private universities in Illinois, including QU. Most QU community members are already fully vaccinated and have documented their vaccination, so this new mandate will change nothing for them. **For those who are not vaccinated or are not yet fully vaccinated**, please read the following:

- If you are not fully vaccinated by September 7, 2021, the Governor's order requires that you begin taking **weekly COVID-19 tests**. We will give you more information next week about COVID-19 testing options on and off campus. If you are partially vaccinated right now, you will discontinue weekly testing once you can provide evidence of full vaccination. Remember, you are only fully vaccinated two weeks after your second dose of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine or two weeks after your single dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine.
- **The COVID-19 weekly testing requirement applies to anyone who spends much time at all on campus.** If you are an unvaccinated volunteer on

campus, you have to take weekly tests. If you are an unvaccinated commuter student taking a single class on campus, you have to take weekly tests. If you are a part-time faculty or staff member working only a few hours on campus each week, you have to take weekly tests. If you are an unvaccinated employee of one of our business partners, you have to take weekly tests. If you are a partially vaccinated community member, even if you are only a few days away from full vaccination, you have to take a weekly test. You get the idea.

- We will do what we can to ensure that unvaccinated members of our community have no-cost options for COVID-19 testing for the next several months. We cannot promise that COVID-19 testing will remain free to unvaccinated students for the rest of the academic year, and we cannot promise that on-campus COVID-19 testing dates and times will be convenient for you.
- If you are required to take COVID-19 tests and miss or skip your weekly COVID-19 test, you may be barred from campus until you take a test. The Governor's Executive Order does not allow for exceptions to this testing requirement.
- The Governor's Executive Order indicates that our unvaccinated on-campus students must **begin vaccination and be fully vaccinated** within 40 days of yesterday's Executive Order if they want to remain on campus and continue to attend classes. The same conditions apply to unvaccinated faculty, staff, and business partners if they want to remain on campus and do their work. However, **unvaccinated community members have the ability to request exemptions from vaccination for medical or religious reasons.**
- On **Monday, August 30, 2021**, all members of our community **will receive a "Vaccine Declination or Deferral Request" form via email**, which allows unvaccinated people to request a medical exemption, a religious exemption, or a deferral of the vaccination requirement in order to consult further with healthcare providers or religious advisors. **If you are unvaccinated and choose not to receive your first vaccine dose by September 7, this form must be completed electronically, signed electronically, saved, and emailed** as a file attachment to covid@quincy.edu **by midnight on September 7. If you do not receive your first vaccine dose or file this electronic form on September 7, you may lose building access or other privileges on the QU campus until you meet one of these requirements.** Again, people who are partially or fully vaccinated do not need to complete this form. It is our intent that unvaccinated

people who fill out the form will receive feedback from the University by September 21 about their requests for a vaccine exemption or a deferral.

- The Governor's Executive Order makes clear that **evidence** of full vaccination must be provided as proof of vaccination. It will not be enough to send an email message confirming dates of vaccination, for example. Unless a **copy of vaccination** card or other acceptable proof of vaccination is submitted to Dr. Tracy, the State of Illinois will consider you unvaccinated.
- We realize you may have questions about the new masking, testing, and vaccination provisions of the Governor's Executive Order. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Tracy. We are confident that every QU community member will figure out a way to meet these new requirements that feels and is safe.

So, **here's the summary, Hawks**: (1) Whether you are vaccinated or unvaccinated, wear a mask indoors. (2) Other than the mask mandate, vaccinated people are not affected in any way by the Governor's Executive Order. (3) By September 7, unvaccinated people need to start the vaccination process OR they need to fill out and submit QU's "Vaccine Declination or Deferral Request" form. That's it.

President McGee looks forward to seeing many of you tomorrow for **chicken and waffles** in the Cafeteria. This will be a culinary experience for the ages, folks.

Sincerely,

Dr. Brian McGee, President

Dr. Christine Tracy, Vice President for Student Development