

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE PANDEMIC PLAN
Updated August 19, 2022



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This pandemic plan is based largely on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and adheres to guidance provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health. It will be adapted as necessary should federal and state guidelines change. CDC advises that policies should reflect the Community COVID levels by county, in our case, Lawrence County, PA. Westminster College community members should expect changes to the policy throughout this academic year.

Guiding Principle

- Focus on the health and safety of faculty, staff, students and visitors.
- Develop data-driven options and implement thoughtful, responsible decision-making for campus operations based on the Governor's orders, CDC guidelines, and applicable laws.
- Communicate proactively and often with students, faculty and staff regarding processes, timelines, and policies.
- Maintain prudent fiscal management in order to align with and support the institutional goal of continuity of employment and payroll.
- Provide divisions of the College latitude to modify processes in order to meet approved guidelines.

Comprehensive Plan for Reducing Transmission in a Population Containing Both Fully Vaccinated and Unvaccinated Individuals

COVID-19 Campus Levels

On February 25, 2022, the CDC revised its tool for determining the most appropriate COVID-19 prevention strategies. The CDC COVID-19 Community Levels can be low, medium, or high and will be used as a framework to navigate our campus response. The aim is to offer a flexible and responsive framework for local communities which protects those most vulnerable to severe disease and to prevent overwhelm of our medical and hospital systems. As such, Westminster College will comply with the CDC Community Levels.

Low/Medium Level

When the Lawrence County community level is low or medium, we will operate using prevention steps consistent with CDC's Low and Medium community levels:

- Masking is optional, with the following exceptions:
 - Individual faculty members or academic departments may require that students and guests be masked while inside classrooms or other academic spaces.
 - Individual members of the campus community may request that masks be worn when meeting indoors for more than 15 minutes where social distancing is not possible.

- Masks are required in the Wellness Center.
- Encourage vaccination.
- Testing of symptomatic individuals.

High Level

When the Lawrence County community level is high, we will operate using prevention steps consistent with CDC's High community levels:

- Masking is required indoors.
- Encourage vaccination.
- Testing of symptomatic individuals.

Vaccination

Vaccination is the leading prevention strategy to protect individuals from illnesses related to contracting the COVID-19 virus. Westminster College strongly encourages faculty, staff, students, and visitors to get vaccinated.

The Wellness Center will provide vaccine clinics to make COVID-19 vaccines easily accessible to employees and students. Vaccines are free to campus members, though our clinic providers will request insurance information.

Individuals are up-to-date with vaccination when they:

- Are within two months of having completed the primary series of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine (one dose), or
- Are within five months of having completed the primary series of the mRNA Pfizer or Moderna vaccines (two doses for both), or
- Have received a booster vaccine, if they are beyond two months of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine or beyond five months of the mRNA Pfizer or Moderna vaccines.

Vaccination Status Reporting

Employees must report their vaccination status to Human Resources. Students must upload their vaccination records to the [Student Health Portal](#). Members of the campus community who received a booster after they initially reported their vaccination status should provide this update to the appropriate office. Those who do not report their vaccination status are assumed to be not up to date on COVID-19 vaccinations.

Wearing Masks

In accordance with [current CDC guidelines](#), indoor mask requirements are based on the COVID-19 campus level. If the campus level is High, masks are required indoors. If the campus level is Low/Medium, masks are optional in most instances, though they are required in Wellness Center and may be required by academic and administrative departments. KN95, N95, or 3-ply surgical masks are recommended in such cases. Masks must completely cover the nose and mouth and fit snugly against the sides of the face without gaps.

Classrooms and On-Campus Housing

Classrooms

When the COVID-19 campus level is Low/Medium, departments and individual faculty members will have discretion about requiring masking of all students within their classrooms, laboratories and offices.

As always, reasonable accommodations will be offered for students who are working with the Office of Disability Resources, noting that COVID infections and related quarantine/isolation do not require academic accommodations under the *Americans with Disabilities Act*. Again, we encourage all students to receive a COVID vaccine and to continue taking appropriate hygiene measures (e.g., washing hands regularly, disinfecting spaces, covering coughs and sneezes, monitoring health daily).

Students who are studying abroad or participating in College-sponsored travel (e.g., conferences supported by Drinko funds, travel courses, field trips) are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated. Further, prior to making any travel plans, students should familiarize themselves with any COVID regulations or policies in place for the host site, as they will be subject to those policies.

Students participating in internships, field experiences, student teaching, and clinical rotations should consult their site supervisor about COVID regulations and policies that exist at the site.

On-Campus Housing

The residence halls are living spaces that seek to provide both a safe place to live and a respite from the maintenance of daily safety procedures. Residence hall protocols are based on COVID-19 campus COVID-19 levels.

Low/Medium Level

- Masking is optional.

High Level

- Masks must be worn by residential students unless in the privacy of their own room.

Daily Health Checks

Regardless of their vaccination status, all members of the campus community should monitor their health daily. Any person with new or unexplained symptoms of COVID-19 must be evaluated for COVID-19 testing, regardless of vaccination status.

COVID-19 Testing

Reentry Testing

All students are encouraged to test at home prior to returning to campus. Students should report any positive tests to studentaff@westminster.edu to make arrangements for an alternative move-in day.

Diagnostic Testing

Employees and students who have signs or symptoms of COVID-19 should receive diagnostic testing.

The Wellness Center will conduct diagnostic testing for students who are symptomatic. Appointments are required for testing. Students should contact the Wellness Center immediately if they become symptomatic. Additionally, self-administered tests will be available to students living in the residence halls for use outside of the Wellness Center hours. To access a test, contact the Residence Life staff. If the test is positive, notify your RA immediately for isolation instructions.

Employees should contact their primary care physician or other COVID testing site for diagnostic testing.

Contact Tracing

Case investigation and contact tracing are essential interventions and will be conducted by the Wellness Center staff in partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH). Guidance provided by the PA DOH will be followed. Members of the campus community are required to cooperate with the contact tracing protocols.

Exposure to COVID-19 (Close Contact)

Individuals who are exposed to COVID-19 are no longer required to quarantine, but are recommended to wear a high-quality mask for 10 days and get tested on day 6 following exposure.

Positive for COVID-19

Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 or who are probable for COVID-19 must follow CDC guidance related to isolation. See the [CDC's website](#) for current information.

Isolation is the term used to separate individuals who are ill with symptoms consistent with COVID-19, have tested positive, or are presumed positive and awaiting test results. Isolation may end after day 5 with a negative test and if symptoms are improving and an individual is fever-free without use of fever reducing medication. Individuals will be expected to mask at all times when around others at home or in public through day 10 from the onset of symptoms or a positive test.

Additional Information for Students

Students who have COVID-19 will be asked to remain on-campus to avoid exposing their family members at home. During isolation, they will reside in designated residence hall rooms with private bathrooms. Signage with telehealth and dining instructions, important campus contact information, and check out instructions will be provided in each room. Campus custodial staff will disinfect and sanitize each room after use.

Additional Information for Employees

Employees who test positive should notify Human Resources so that case investigation and contact tracing can be conducted. They should inform their supervisor. If remote work is not possible, employees may use Temporary COVID-19 Pandemic Leave (See Appendix A).

Cleaning, Improving Ventilation, and Maintaining Healthy Facilities

Physical Plant will continue to provide daily cleaning of classrooms, bathrooms, and public spaces. Physical Plant will disinfect areas when a space has been occupied by a person who has tested positive for COVID-19.

Physical Plant improved ventilation as a preventive measure prior to reopening in fall 2020. They will continue to monitor ventilation.

Where sanitation stations have been provided, a shared responsibility for cleaning and disinfecting spaces between users is encouraged.

Campus Dining

The College has worked with Sodexo, our dining partner, to provide compliant food services. All Titan cards and credit cards will be swiped by the individual cardholder. Food may be ordered at kiosks to reduce the number of guests in lines.

Gatherings & Events

Crowded settings still present a risk of transmission as they bring together people from different communities. If the COVID-19 campus level is high, masks will be required indoors. If the campus level is medium/low, event planners may still require participants to mask indoors, and should communicate this requirement to participants in advance.

Travel & Transportation

Students who are participating in College-sponsored travel are strongly encouraged to be up to date on vaccinations. Faculty may require vaccination for domestic travel, and all College-sponsored trips will comply with destination site requirements, which may include a vaccine requirement for participants.

Study abroad and international travel are subject to destination policies and CDC guidance.

Student organization-sponsored travel should follow the CDC travel guidelines.

The Campus Shuttle has resumed services and will be operational for all students.

The Extended Athletic Travel COVID Protocol applies to all varsity athletics-related travel (e.g., any trip involving a multiple-night stay). To be eligible for extended travel with an athletic team, athletes and their parents/guardians must complete and return the Extended Athletic Travel Agreement form acknowledging their understanding of and plans to comply with the Protocol. For more information, contact the Department of Athletics.

Out of concern for our employees and those with whom they come in contact, employees must follow the [CDC travel guidelines](#), and must have proof of vaccination on file with Human Resources or have an approved exemption prior to beginning College-sponsored travel.

Communication Policies and Procedures

- A. Communication with Students and Parents: Students will receive emailed instructions, with text reminders, about move-in procedures and COVID-19 policies from Student Affairs and Enrollment Management personnel. Parents will also receive regular email messages about campus policies and procedures. A special email account, healthycampus@westminster.edu, has been established to facilitate two-way communication.
- B. Signage: The Marketing and Communications Office has created a library of signage that explains requirements for physical distancing; wearing cloth face coverings; specific information about symptoms and detection of COVID-19; and safe handwashing techniques. Individual offices may download and print posters and signs for their areas from the [COVID-19 Resources page](#). This page also provides information about the floor decals that can be ordered directly from the Print Shop. If new or replacement custom signs are required, please submit requests to marketing@westminster.edu. Marketing and Communication Office will evaluate existing signs and floor markings in public areas (e.g., classrooms, restrooms, and building entrances) and will repost signs, if necessary.
- C. Availability of Policies: Policies and procedures related to COVID-19 have been incorporated into the Student Code of Conduct and are available to employees through [my.westminster.edu under the Employee tab](#).
- D. The president of the College and the COVID Response Team serve as the contact point for external groups. A special email account, healthycampus@westminster.edu, has been established to facilitate two-way communication.

Reporting Non-Compliance with COVID-19 Policies

Employees and students are expected to comply with the College's COVID-19 policies to protect the campus community, and this expectation is described in codes of conduct for employees and students. Campus members who would like to report instances of non-compliance should submit an email to healthycampus@westminster.edu. The email should describe the situation where non-compliance occurred, the employee or student involved, and the date of the occurrence. Follow-up will occur with the employee or student through the appropriate administrative office.

Appendix A: Temporary COVID-19 Pandemic Leave Policy

Definitions and Instructions for Use of Pandemic Leave Time During COVID-19

Beginning with the start of Governor Wolf's green phase, Westminster College will provide paid time off for exempt (salaried) and non-exempt (hourly) staff for use during periods of quarantine, employee illness, and/or care for others related to COVID-19 associated disruptions up to **20 days** for the categories described below.

When to Use COVID-19 Pandemic Time Off

Employees are eligible to utilize Pandemic Leave if they fall into one of three categories below:

- Staff member's own illness related to COVID-19.
- To care for an immediate family member's illness related to COVID-19.
- Quarantine/isolation due to COVID-19 symptoms or possible exposure to the virus, when remote work options are not available.

Reporting Pandemic Leave

For hourly employees, a special leave code titled *Pandemic Leave* has been created to use when an absence is directly related to COVID-19. When entering an absence related to COVID-19 on time reports, please use the *Pandemic Leave* option. Time off using pandemic leave will generally be used in consecutive full day increments. Staff members who are sick unrelated to COVID-19 or caring for family members who are sick unrelated to COVID-19 should use regular sick leave.

Accrual Rate – Full Time Staff

Westminster College will provide paid time off for full-time exempt (salaried) and non-exempt (hourly) per the categories above for a total of up to 20 days.

Pandemic Leave will not be paid upon termination or retirement and the College reserves the right to terminate this policy at any time and for any reason. As always, communication with your supervisor during this time is critical.

For additional information regarding the time report entry of this leave, please contact the Compensation and Benefits Coordinator in Human Resources.

For information regarding the different circumstances around using this leave, please contact the Director of Human Resources.