

Dear WCU Faculty and Staff,

This is an exciting time of year as we welcome our new President and look forward to the start of a new academic year.

The WCU COVID response team would like to share an overview of the University's COVID-19 policies and expectations for the upcoming school year. Given the University's high vaccination rate, and in consultation with public health officials and partners across the Hattiesburg area, the University's COVID protocols have adapted to the updated changes according to CDC guidelines.

For the 2022 fall semester, the following protocols will be in place.

Vaccinations and Boosters

The University encourages all faculty and staff to be fully vaccinated against COVID. To be considered fully vaccinated, all William Carey faculty and staff should have received:

- Two shots of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines or any WHO approved vaccination, plus a Pfizer or Moderna booster 6 months after completion of prior series; or
- A single shot of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, plus a Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna booster 4 months after initial J&J vaccine.

Testing

Symptomatic Testing

Symptomatic testing for faculty and staff is available through the University Health Clinic. Please call 601-318-6736 to schedule an appointment for evaluation and testing.

Asymptomatic Testing

Screening testing is no longer recommended by the CDC. However, CDC continues to recommend testing for those vaccinated or unvaccinated on Day 5 after a known exposure. This testing can be performed via at home testing or at the University Health Clinic by scheduling an appointment. We encourage you to know your status if you think you have been exposed.

At-home Testing

Faculty and staff who receive a positive test result through an at-home test should upload their positive test to their Carey Connect. If at-home test results are positive outside of normal business hours, students should upload their positive test and start quarantine procedures. A WCU COVID team member will be in touch the next business day regarding next steps. Until faculty and staff hear from a COVID response team member, they should isolate in their residence, whether living on or off-campus. Please report your positive test to the Mississippi Department of Health at [COVID-19 Home Test Reporting \(ms.gov\)](https://www.ms.gov/COVID-19-Home-Test-Reporting). If symptoms persist and/or you need to seek medical treatment, please contact the University Health Clinic on campus at the number above.

All Positive Tests, regardless of vaccination status

Isolate for 5 days (with your day of symptoms onset or positive test, whichever comes first, as Day 0). i.e test positive and symptoms started on August 1st, isolation would go through August 6th.

Asymptomatic/Minimally Symptomatic Individuals

As long as you remain asymptomatic (having no symptoms) or minimally symptomatic and have improvement by end of isolation in addition to being fever free for 24 hours, then you can return to campus and activities with masking around others until Day 10. After day 10, masking is no longer required.

Moderate or Severe Symptoms

If symptoms persist past the normal 5 day isolation or if symptoms are severe, CDC recommends isolating for total of 10 days.

* Regardless of your symptoms, it is important to remember that you are at increased risk of transmitting the virus through day 10 and should avoid unnecessary exposures to individuals with increased risk of developing severe illness.

Exposures

Regardless of vaccination status, once you have known exposure CDC recommends that you take extra precautions by avoiding large gatherings or to wear a mask around others for 10 days from day of exposure. Monitor for symptoms including runny nose, cough, body aches, fever, nausea, and vomiting. Test on day 5 from exposure (this can be done with home test or testing at University Health Clinic).

Masking

With the exception of those who test positive, masking is optional indoors and outdoors on campus, including at events, for all William Carey, staff, students and visitors. Regardless of vaccination status, masks are required while visiting the University Health Clinic per Hattiesburg Clinic policy. Mask will be provided upon arrival at clinic if needed.

All University community members are encouraged to remain mindful of their health and wellness. Faculty and staff who feel unwell should call the WCU clinic for a testing appointment or take an at-home test. Additionally, faculty and staff who feel sick are encouraged to defer to best wellness practices such as wearing a mask and remaining home if possible to help keep the campus community safe.

Although this pandemic has waned, the University continues to monitor the local and national landscape and will adjust its policies accordingly to safeguard the health and well-being of the entire campus community.

For the latest information on the University's COVID policies and protocols, please refer to <https://www.wmcarey.edu/page/coronavirus-update> . If you have any questions or need any additional information, please feel free to contact Dr. Haney at jhaney@wmcarey.edu.

We wish you a healthy and safe fall semester.

COVID Response Coordinator,

Dr. Jude Haney