

**To:** Montgomery College Employees  
**From:** Dr. Charlene M. Dukes, Interim President  
**Subject:** **Mask Requirement Remains in Place at the College**  
**Date:** October 28, 2021

Good morning. I am writing to convey that Montgomery College's mask requirement will remain in place despite Montgomery County's decision to remove its mask mandate effective today. The College's requirement to wear masks will remain in place until further notice.

Several circumstances have impacted this decision. Given that the College's vaccine/testing requirement for employees does not take effect until November 8 and employees will be returning to worksites simultaneously on that date, it seems prudent that we continue with masking, a practice that is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as a powerful tool against the spread of coronavirus. In addition, students are not required to be vaccinated or tested until January 7, 2022, another consideration in this decision. The College's commitment to protect the health and safety of those in classrooms and workspaces is enhanced by the extra precaution that masks provide.

While I understand that masks can be cumbersome, the health of our employees and students remains the College's first priority. If you recall, the College instituted a mask mandate before the county did and we are free to change our status in accordance with public health and other considerations that we deem relevant. If conditions continue to improve—sustained decreases in infection and coronavirus spread—the College will re-assess the requirement. In order to give employees a chance to re-acclimate to working in offices and classrooms together again, I envision the requirement remaining in effect until at least December and possibly through the end of the semester. This decision will be re-evaluated based on local COVID-19 metrics.

Please watch for further information as the College continues to design the safest possible environment for teaching, learning, and working.