

**To:** Montgomery College Community

**From:** Dr. Charlene M. Dukes, Interim President

**Subject:** **Plans for Spring Semester and COVID-19 Precautions**

**Date:** January 14, 2022

Since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, the College's decisions have been guided by the latest available science on the virus from local, state, and federal health experts. The safety and health of our employees and students remain our top priorities and the College is carefully monitoring the latest data and conditions, especially in light of the omicron spread. The College may need to adjust plans based on the current available public health guidance and any changes will be conveyed by Wednesday, January 19, 2022.

### **Spring 2022 Semester**

At this time, our plan is to begin the spring 2022 semester as planned on January 24, serving our students both in person and online based on the modality of courses for which they have registered. Although Montgomery County remains one of the most highly vaccinated communities in the nation, the spread of the omicron variant requires us to be even more careful to minimize its transmission. I want to remind everyone of the tools you should be using consistently:

- All students and employees should take the Daily Health Assessment.
- Anyone with an approved medical or religious exemption must comply with the established [testing and reporting requirements](#).
- Masks must be worn at all times while indoors, including in all offices, except while actively eating or drinking.
- KN95 or KF94 masks are strongly encouraged; double masking is an alternative to reduce risks of transmission.
- Surgical masks can be obtained by contacting Public Safety or at Raptor Central. The College will soon have a supply of KN95 masks as well.
- Where possible, increase distances among people indoors.
- Students attending face-to-face classes or accessing campus services in person must upload proof of vaccination status or apply for a medical or religious exception.
- Approximately 6,000 of the 9,200 students who must be vaccinated have been verified or have submitted appropriate documentation for verification.

The College is adding another tool to our efforts to create the safest possible environments for our employees and students:

- Booster shots will be required of employees who are eligible—according to their vaccination schedule. If you are eligible for a booster, please don't wait to get it. Directions on the procedures for uploading vaccine booster information will be shared shortly but we should all be familiar with [how to access boosters in the county](#).
- Students who are taking face-to-face classes and are registered for spring classes will be encouraged to receive boosters according to their vaccination schedule at the earliest possible date. Once enrolled students are in the system as vaccination-verified, the College will communicate with them according to their eligibility for boosters and implement processes to verify this.

These steps will further bolster the foundation that the College has constructed to safeguard the health of our community and mitigate the spread of the coronavirus and any variants.

I want to take this opportunity to thank each of you for remaining vigilant. Each of us has a role to play in containing the spread of the coronavirus. The more we care for one another, the greater our collective health will be. If you are exhibiting symptoms, stay home and [seek out a COVID test](#). Anyone who does receive a positive test should report those results to [PublicHealth@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:PublicHealth@montgomerycollege.edu) so that we can accurately track cases, and follow quarantine protocol.

Please watch for any further updates on health conditions or operational changes.