

## **MOUNT ST. JOSEPH UNIVERSITY COVID-19 SAFETY GUIDELINES**

The Mount St. Joseph University COVID-19 Safety Guidelines (Guidelines) are a University policy that applies to all students, employees, and visitors as well as to all aspects of campus operations. The Guidelines are intended to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the University community and beyond, and are predicated on individual responsibility to adhere to all requirements. The Guidelines have been developed considering recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as well as other health agencies.

Throughout the pandemic, the Guidelines have been updated as the COVID-19 situation has evolved. The University's approach to the Guidelines will continue to be proactive and based on relevant data from the Mount community, Hamilton County, and health agencies. Updates to the Guidelines will continue to occur as needed.

Please direct questions about these Guidelines to the University's General Counsel, Paige Ellerman, at 513-244-4393 or at [paige.ellerman@msj.edu](mailto:paige.ellerman@msj.edu).

### **Guiding Principles and Overview**

All members of the Mount community must do their part to help reduce and/or contain infections. All students, employees, and visitors are expected to know and comply with these Guidelines at all times.

- Students and employees who have signs or symptoms of COVID-19, have had exposure to COVID-19 when they are not up-to-date on their vaccination, or have been diagnosed with COVID-19 must **immediately** report to the Wellness Center or Office of Human Resources, respectively, as set forth in the Guidelines, even if they are not seeking to enter campus or have not been on campus.
- Visitors who have signs or symptoms of COVID-19, have had exposure to COVID-19 and are not up-to-date on their vaccination, or have been diagnosed with COVID-19 will not be permitted to enter campus and may not access campus until they have met certain health requirements set forth in the Guidelines.

It is imperative that all students, employees, and visitors take personal responsibility for monitoring their health and following the safety and hygiene protocols set forth in the Guidelines. These individual actions will support the well-being of our entire community.

The University expects the responsible and respectful cooperation of all students, employees, and visitors in complying with these Guidelines. The University reserves the right to modify these Guidelines as it determines necessary in its sole discretion and to take appropriate action to ensure compliance with these Guidelines.

Noncompliance with the Guidelines—including, but not limited to, any false or misleading statements—is subject to disciplinary or corrective action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct or Employee Handbook, as applicable, which may include suspension, expulsion, or termination, as applicable.

## **COVID-19 Safety and Hygiene Protocols While on Campus**

All students, employees, and visitors must follow the Mount's COVID-19 safety and hygiene protocols at all times while they are on campus. These safety and hygiene protocols are updated based on CDC recommendations and will be enforced as set forth in this Policy.

As of February 25, 2022, the CDC announced that COVID-19 Community Levels are a new tool to help communities decide what prevention steps to take based on the latest data. Levels can be low, medium, or high and are determined by looking at hospital beds being used, hospital admissions, and the total number of new COVID-19 cases in an area. The University will follow this CDC guidance and require safety and hygiene protocols based on COVID-19 Community Levels in Hamilton County.

As of March 14, 2022, due to low COVID-19 Community Levels in Hamilton County, the COVID-19 safety and hygiene protocols are:

**Masks:** Indoor masking will be **optional on campus and at University-sponsored events** except in the following cases:

- In health care clinical settings (wearing a mask is required);
- When you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 and are not up-to-date on your COVID-19 vaccine;
- When you are instructed to wear a mask by a healthcare provider;
- If you feel ill with upper respiratory symptoms or you are COVID-positive, and isolate; or
- If otherwise posted or instructed by the University.

This masking policy is for everyone, regardless of vaccination status. It is important for all of us to remember that some people may feel uncomfortable being around unmasked individuals. Additionally, many vaccinated individuals may choose to wear a mask for their own safety or for the safety of their loved ones. Please be respectful of everyone's choices.

**Wash Hands Often:** Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

**Cover Coughs and Sneezes:** Remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow. Throw used tissues in the trash. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

## **Mandatory Reporting by Students and Employees of Signs or Symptoms, Diagnosis, and Exposure to COVID-19**

All students and employees are expected to seek medical treatment and report to the University the fact that they have signs or symptoms of COVID-19 that have not been diagnosed by a healthcare provider as something other than COVID-19, if they have a diagnosis of COVID-19, or if they are not up-to-date on their vaccination and have an exposure to COVID-19.

**Students and employees who are exposed to COVID-19 when they are up-to-date on their vaccinations do not have to report their exposure to COVID-19 unless they begin experiencing symptoms of or are diagnosed with COVID-19.**

Reporting is mandatory. Reporting allows the University to support ill or potentially ill students and employees in adhering to self-isolation and quarantine protocols and ensuring they are symptom-free for the requisite timeframe, depending on each individual's situation, before returning to campus.

Following the submission of a report, students and employees will receive written and telephonic follow-up regarding the return to campus health protocols from the Wellness Center or Office of Human Resources, respectively.

### **What are the signs and symptoms of COVID-19 that require a report?**

The CDC has identified the following mild to severe signs and symptoms of COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

These signs and symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. The CDC website has extensive resources regarding COVID-19, including a self-checker guide to help you make decisions and seek appropriate medical care that can be accessed at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>. In addition, the CDC recommends calling 911 if you experience emergency warning signs for COVID-19, including difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion or inability to wake up, bluish lips or face.

### **What is a diagnosis or exposure to COVID-19 that requires a report?**

A COVID-19 diagnosis can be confirmed by laboratory testing or the medical judgment of a healthcare provider.

An exposure occurs when: an unvaccinated individual is within 6 feet of someone who is positive for COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes, with or without a mask; an unvaccinated individual's household member or intimate partner has COVID-19; and, when an unvaccinated individual is providing in-home care for another person with COVID-19 without using recommended infection control precautions. If you are unvaccinated and have had this type of contact during the period of time beginning 48 hours prior to the onset of an individual's symptoms (or for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to specimen collection), and ending when the individual is no longer contagious (as set forth below), you have an exposure to COVID-19.

### What does it mean to be "up-to-date" on your vaccination?

A person is up-to-date on their vaccination if:

- The person is within 5 months of receiving the second dose in a 2-dose series of the vaccine; or
- The person is within 2 months of receiving the single dose of a Johnson & Johnson vaccine; or
- The person has received booster shots as recommended by the CDC.

### Current booster recommendations:

- Everyone ages 5 years and older should get 1 booster after completing their primary COVID-19 vaccination series
- Everyone ages 50 and older should get 2 booster shots after completing their primary COVID-19 vaccination series
- People who are 12 years and older and ***are moderately or severely immunocompromised*** should receive 2 boosters after completing their primary COVID-19 vaccination series

Booster schedules can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html>

**NOTE: If a person is not up-to-date on their vaccination, they will be treated as unvaccinated for purposes of reporting, isolation, and quarantine as set forth in these Guidelines.**

### How Do I Make a Report?

- **Residential students** who have COVID-19 signs or symptoms that have not been diagnosed by a healthcare professional as something other than COVID-19, have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or have been exposed to COVID-19 when they are not up to date on their vaccination  
**MUST:**

- **Vacate campus immediately** (including your assigned room in Seton Residence Hall);
- **Isolate/quarantine in the student's permanent residence for the time period prescribed by the Wellness Center staff per these Guidelines:**

**NOTE:** Students who live outside of the Greater Cincinnati region may make a request to the Wellness Center to isolate/quarantine on campus, but available

isolation/quarantine rooms on campus are extremely limited and requests may not be granted;

- **Not come to campus or attend any University activity or event;**
  - **Immediately report their situation to the University's Wellness Center by either:**
    - submitting a report through myMount after logging in through the following link [https://mymount.msj.edu/ICS/COVID-19\\_Reporting.jnz](https://mymount.msj.edu/ICS/COVID-19_Reporting.jnz), OR
    - calling 513-244-4408

**NOTE:** Wellness Center staff will respond as soon as possible, sometimes the next day depending on the time of day that a report is received, and will provide the student with instructions for isolation/quarantine consistent with these Guidelines; and,
  - **Call their healthcare provider or visit LionsHealth at <https://timely.md/faq/lions-health-mount-st-joseph-university/> for additional instructions.**
- **Commuter students** who have COVID-19 signs or symptoms that have not been diagnosed by a healthcare professional as something other than COVID-19, have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or who have been exposed to COVID-19 when they are not up-to-date on their vaccination **MUST:**

- **Vacate campus immediately;**
- **Not come to campus or any University activity or event;**
- **Immediately report their situation to the University's Wellness Center by either:**
  - submitting a report through myMount after logging in through the following link [https://mymount.msj.edu/ICS/COVID-19\\_Reporting.jnz](https://mymount.msj.edu/ICS/COVID-19_Reporting.jnz), OR
  - calling 513-244-4949

**NOTE:** Wellness Center staff will respond as soon as possible, sometimes the next day depending on the time of day that a report is received, and will provide the student with instructions for isolation/quarantine consistent with these Guidelines; and,
- **Call their healthcare provider or visit LionsHealth at <https://timely.md/faq/lions-health-mount-st-joseph-university/> for additional instructions.**

**Students are Responsible for Their Attendance:** Students who are unable to attend classes or meet other course requirements due to COVID-19 isolation or illness must review the University's COVID-19 Absence Policy and, if applicable, comply with the procedures for obtaining a Class Note. The policy can be accessed at: [Student COVID-19 Absence Policy](#).

Separately, and when applicable, students may seek a reasonable accommodation under the Student Disability Accommodation Policy:

[https://mymount.msje.edu/ICS/icsfs/Student\\_Disability\\_Accommodation\\_Policy\\_and\\_Grievance.pdf?target=c2eaca5b-5dd4-47e2-9e80-71a32471f468](https://mymount.msje.edu/ICS/icsfs/Student_Disability_Accommodation_Policy_and_Grievance.pdf?target=c2eaca5b-5dd4-47e2-9e80-71a32471f468). Questions should be directed to the Director of The Learning Center, Disability Services, and Project EXCEL who can be reached at 513-244-4623 or [stacy.mueller@msje.edu](mailto:stacy.mueller@msje.edu).

Additional healthcare information for students regarding COVID-19 can be accessed at [https://mymount.msje.edu/ICS/Mount\\_Community/Wellness\\_Center/COVID-19\\_Resources.jnz](https://mymount.msje.edu/ICS/Mount_Community/Wellness_Center/COVID-19_Resources.jnz)

- **Faculty or staff** who have COVID-19 signs or symptoms that have not been diagnosed by a healthcare professional as something other than COVID-19, have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or who are not up-to-date on their vaccination and have been exposed to COVID-19 **MUST**:

- **Vacate campus immediately;**
- **Not come to campus or any University activity or event;**
- **Immediately report their situation to the University's Office of Human Resources by either:**
  - submitting a report through myMount after logging in through the following link [https://mymount.msje.edu/ICS/COVID-19\\_Reporting.jnz](https://mymount.msje.edu/ICS/COVID-19_Reporting.jnz), OR
  - calling 513-244-4494
- **Call their healthcare provider for additional instructions.**

**Faculty and Staff are Responsible for Their Attendance:** Faculty and staff who are unable to work due to COVID-19 isolation or illness must comply with all routine University and/or department attendance, PTO, FMLA and other leave policies, as available and as applicable. Please note there is no special COVID-19- leave or paid time off policy for University employees.

## **Return to Campus Protocols after Signs or Symptoms, Diagnosis, or Exposure to COVID-19**

**If you are a student or employees with any of the following:**

- Current or recent signs or symptoms of COVID-19 that have not been diagnosed as something other than COVID-19 by a healthcare provider;
- A COVID-19 diagnosis, or
- An exposure to COVID-19 while not up-to-date on your vaccination,

**Then you must not return to campus until:**

- You have complied with the following standards (based on the CDC's guidelines for Discontinuation of Home Isolation and When to Quarantine), which may require quarantine or isolation for a period of time, and
- You have been approved to return to campus by the Wellness Center or Office of Human Resources, as applicable.

## **Mandatory Quarantine after Exposure**

### **If you are not up-to-date on your vaccination and were exposed to COVID-19:**

- You must not visit campus and quarantine for 5 days followed by strict mask use for 5 additional days.
- You should test on day 5, if possible
- Essential employees *may* be eligible for shortened quarantine if approved by the Office of Human Resources.
- If you develop signs or symptoms of COVID-19, you must not visit campus and must get tested. Also, you must make a mandatory report to the Wellness Center or Office of Human Resources, as applicable

### **If you are up-to-date on your vaccination and were exposed to COVID-19:**

- You are not required to quarantine
- You must comply with strict mask use around others for 10 days
- You should test on day 5, if possible
- If you develop signs or symptoms of COVID-19, you must not visit campus and must get tested. Also, you must make a mandatory report to the Wellness Center or Office of Human Resources, as applicable.

## **Mandatory Isolation for COVID-19 Illness**

### **If you have COVID-19 signs or symptoms, regardless of vaccination status:**

- You must not visit campus until you have had no fever for at least 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medicine), the other symptoms have improved, and at least 5 days have passed since the symptoms first appeared.
  - Anyone with signs or symptoms of COVID-19 that are diagnosed by a healthcare provider as something other than COVID-19 must take all appropriate precautions for their condition, including staying home when sick with any illness that may be transmitted in the workplace
- A negative COVID test result and/or documentation from the healthcare provider must be submitted to the Wellness Center or Office of Human Resources prior to returning to campus. Home COVID tests will not be accepted for employees, contractors and children under age 18 for clearance to return to campus. Students must have a home test proctored by a member of the Wellness Center via Zoom to be cleared to return to campus.

### **If you have tested positive for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status:**

- You must not visit campus and isolate for 5 days
- After 5 days, if you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving, you can end isolation
- After 5 days, if you have a fever, you must continue to isolate until your fever resolves

- You must continue to wear a mask around others for 5 days after isolation ends

## **COVID-19 Contact Tracing**

The University strives to provide timely information about COVID-19 to all members of the community so they can make informed decisions about visiting campus and taking protective measures. The COVID-19 Dashboard located on myMount contains information about the number of students and employees who have tested positive for COVID-19 within certain time frames.

In addition, the University endeavors to conduct prompt and effective contact tracing when it learns a student, employee or campus visitor has been diagnosed with COVID-19. Students and employees with COVID-19 are required to cooperate with the University's contact tracing procedures and identify all students, employees or campus visitors with whom they had close contact (within 6-feet for a period of 15 minutes or more) during the period of time they may have been contagious. Any such "close contacts" will be notified individually by phone as soon as possible, with follow-up instructions provided by email. Following communication with all "close contacts", the University will email notice of the situation to other groups of students, employees or campus visitors who were not "close contacts" of the infected person but who may have been in areas on campus where the infected person visited.

The University's contact tracing process prioritizes COVID-19 illness and exposure, is conducted as soon as possible after notice of a positive case is received, and concludes in varying timeframes based on the circumstances. Students and employees are encouraged to monitor the phone and MSJ.edu email for contact tracing communications from the University and to respond as promptly as possible when requested.

## **Vaccine Recommendations**

The University encourages all eligible members of the Mount community to get the COVID-19 vaccine and to remain up-to-date on their vaccine as recommended by the CDC. The University also encourages all eligible members of the Mount community to get the flu vaccine each year. Please discuss the COVID-19 vaccine and flu vaccine with your healthcare provider if you have any questions.

## **Access to Free COVID-19 Vaccinations and Boosters**

Students and employees may schedule their vaccinations and boosters through outside sources. To find a vaccine and booster location, please visit the [CDC's website](#) or search [vaccines.gov](#), text your ZIP code to 438829, or call 1-800-232-0233. Vaccinations and boosters are free to all persons in the United States. If you have health insurance, vaccinations must be run through your health insurance company. Unreimbursed costs associated with a vaccination appointment are extremely rare and are the responsibility of students and employees.

**NOTE: University employees should contact their supervisor if they need to schedule a vaccination/booster shot during work hours. With advance supervisor approval, the University will pay employees for the time it takes during the workday to obtain a vaccination/booster shot.**

## **Student COVID-19 Absences**

The University has adopted a Student COVID-19 Absence Policy to address the impact of quarantining, isolating and other COVID-19 related absences. The full policy can be accessed at [Student COVID-19 Absence Policy Link](#). Students must have documentation (a "Class Note") from the Wellness Center (or certified

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Athletic Trainer for student-athletes) to request to have approved class absences and/or to obtain other temporary course adjustments due to a COVID-19 situation.

Students are responsible for *promptly* providing their Class Note to any instructor they have for any course to request approved absences and/or temporary course adjustments due to their COVID-19 situation. Students are responsible for documenting agreed upon approved course absences and/or any temporary course adjustments in an email acknowledged by each course instructor. Failure to document this information may result in unapproved absences and/or inability to receive temporary course adjustments.

Students are also responsible for ensuring they understand the expectations of their make-up plan or any temporary course adjustments and for following up on any outstanding questions or feedback to or from the instructor regarding status or the make-up plan. Students should work closely with instructors as they may have a variety of options available for keeping up with course content.

Students do not receive an approved COVID-19 absence and/or temporary course adjustment for any course under this policy unless and until they have completed all communications and documentation with the course instructor, as set forth in the policy.

Please note that, to the maximum extent possible under the circumstances, students are responsible for keeping up with all course work while in isolation or quarantine. If a student is excused from class attendance or an assignment deadline that falls within their period of mandatory isolation or quarantine, the student will be required to make it up within a reasonable time as determined by the instructor. When the conditions for mandatory isolation or quarantine have concluded, students must return to class and comply with all normal course expectations.

Clinicals, labs, internships and other educational experiences that require certain hours and/or types of in-person learning and/or that involve external placements must be made up as required by a student's course/program. The University cannot guarantee that make-up opportunities will be available for certain types of learning experiences immediately or during the current academic term. Insufficient make-up opportunity or extensions for any such course is not a valid reason to reduce a mandatory period of quarantine or isolation.

Carefully review the entire Student COVID-19 Absence Policy for complete information. Any questions about this policy should be directed to your instructor, the Wellness Center, or the Office of the Provost at [Provost@msj.edu](mailto:Provost@msj.edu), as applicable.

### **Seton Residence Hall Protocols**

The Mount's Office of Residence Life has developed COVID-19 safety protocols to supplement these Guidelines in order to address the unique challenges presented with residential living on campus. For complete Seton Residence Hall safety protocols, please contact the Office of Residence Life at (513) 244-4304.

### **Classrooms, Labs and Presentations**

The University's Guidelines apply to all persons in any classroom, lab or meeting/presentation space on campus and to any University-sponsored event held off campus.

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Students engaging in an educational activity hosted by an outside organization (clinicals, internships, etc.) must comply with the outside organization's COVID-19 protocol.

### **University Events and Meetings**

There are no restrictions on the size of or format of events and meetings on campus, subject to the other terms and conditions of these Guidelines being followed.

If a meeting is scheduled to be held in person and an employee wishes to participate through Zoom or other video conferencing technology, the employee must (1) make a request to the meeting organizer, (2) determine if video conferencing is possible for the meeting location by contacting ISS at 513-244-4357, and (3) ensure that all technological needs are prepared well in advance of any meeting start time by working with any necessary University personnel. A request to participate in a meeting through Zoom may not be granted for employees in the reasonable determination of the meeting organizer.

Free video conferencing accounts are available through a variety of platforms. The University's Zoom or other video conferencing service may be available for use by employees conducting school business and by student organization meetings when professional level technology is needed. Arrangements for Zoom or other video conferencing should be made well in advance of any event or meeting; last-minute requests may not be possible. Please contact ISS at 513-244-4357 for information.

### **Athletics**

The Mount's Athletic Department has developed COVID-19 safety protocols to supplement these Guidelines in order to address the unique challenges presented with athletic practices and competitions, consistent with the recommendations and requirements of the Heartland Collegiate Athletic Conference (HCAC) and the NCAA. For complete Athletic Department safety protocols, please contact the Athletic Department at (513) 244-4311.

### **COVID-19 Safety Guidelines Apply to All Students and Employees**

All students and employees must follow all Guidelines. This includes, but is not limited to, reporting any COVID-19 signs or symptoms, diagnosis, or exposure, as set forth in the Guidelines.

### **Enforcement of Policy**

These Guidelines have been enacted for the health and safety of all members of the University community during the global pandemic, and they will be enforced. The University's Police Department and Office of Public Safety will require any non-compliant person to adhere to the Guidelines and will require any non-compliant person to leave campus or any University activity or event. Reports of noncompliance with this policy should be directed to the University Policy Department and Office of Public Safety at 513-244-4226.

Students who fail or refuse to comply with the Guidelines will be reported to the Dean of Students, who will address reports of noncompliance consistent with these Guidelines and/or the Student Code of Conduct, which may include a variety of types of corrective action and/or discipline, up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Employees who fail or refuse to comply with the Guidelines will be reported to the Office of Human Resources, which will address reports of noncompliance consistent with the conduct expectations set

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forth in these Guidelines and/or the Employee Handbook, which may include a variety of types of corrective action and/or discipline, up to and including termination.