

# COVID-19 health and safety guidance

Home Health and safety UMS guidance Black Bears Care

## Health- and safety-related topics

UMaine and UMM community public health alert system

UMaine science and medicine updates

### Plans and resources

#### Friday Futurecasts and Updates from Campus Leaders

Friday Futurecast – December 3

Published: December 3, 2021

Friday Futurecast – November 18

Published: November 19, 2021

Friday Futurecast – November 12

Published: November 12, 2021

Friday Futurecast – November 5

Published: November 5, 2021

Friday Futurecast – October 29

Published: October 29, 2021

## COVID FAQs for instructors for fall 2021

September 1, 2021 | [Faculty and staff information](#), [Health and safety](#)

### Where can I find the latest guidance?

Please visit the [Together for Maine](#) website for the latest updates. Please note that this guidance may change if circumstances warrant.

### Is there a required syllabus statement for COVID-19?

No, but we recommend including the following on syllabi: "To keep our campus safe, students are expected to comply with all University policies related to the COVID-19 pandemic. For the latest guidance, please visit <https://umaine.edu/return> or <https://www.maine.edu/together/community-guidance/students/>"

### Are there any enhanced cleaning procedures planned for fall? If so, what are they, where will they occur, and how often?

As with last year, hand sanitizer stations are placed in building common areas and wipes are present in classrooms for classroom occupants to use. Additionally, we have designated an employee to be a touchpoint cleaner for campus during the day, similar to last year.

### I am concerned about the air quality in the buildings.

UMaine has been following the UMS, MECDC and SAB guidance since the beginning of the pandemic. As was done during the summer of 2020, FM worked on servicing the building HVAC and ventilation systems across campus in 2021 with a focus on maximizing make-up (outside) air. This included any needed repairs, air filter changes and balancing when necessary. This work continues to be ongoing as these systems are in constant operation. Ensuring that the existing building air systems, where present, are functioning properly has been and continues to be key. In buildings that do not have building HVAC systems, the current guidance remains to utilize open windows to provide outside air when windows are present.

### Must I wear a mask while I am teaching, if I am socially distanced from my students?

Yes, the mask requirement applies to everyone.

### May I ask my students whether they are vaccinated?

No, because asking students if they are vaccinated may prompt unwanted disclosure of protected health information or disability status. Due to the power differential between faculty/staff and students, asking students whether they are vaccinated may put them in a situation where they feel that they have no choice but to answer, even if they would prefer not to.

### Can students eat and drink in classrooms this year?

Neither students nor faculty may eat in classrooms due to the increased risk that results from removing face coverings. Students who have a disability accommodation allowing them to eat in classrooms should leave the classroom and eat in an area where they can be socially distanced from others. Students may hydrate during class, lifting or removing their mask only when actively drinking. In a longer class, instructors should consider allowing a break time for students to snack.

### What do I do if a student is not wearing a mask in class?

Faculty should be prepared to regularly remind students of the current COVID-19 safety guidelines. A maskless student should be asked to don their mask. If they refuse, they should be asked to leave the classroom, and the faculty member should fill out a Black Bears Care Compliance Report (<https://umaine.edu/return/compliance-report/>) or contact Student Life (Kenda Scheele, Associate Vice President for Student Life and Senior Associate Dean (207) 581-1406 / [kenda.scheele@maine.edu](mailto:kenda.scheele@maine.edu)) for disciplinary action. If the student refuses to leave the classroom, the faculty member can speak to them afterward, call Student Life, or dismiss the entire class.

### What if a student tells me they have a medical exemption from masking?

Instructors will receive direct notifications from Student Accessibility Services about any ADA accommodation for masking for their students as soon as it is processed.

### What if a student requests that I allow them to take my in-person class remotely, for example, by adding a streaming element?

Courses should be taught in the modality listed in MaineStreet. Livestreaming a course to allow students to take an in-person course remotely would constitute a modality change from in-person to Hyflex. All modality changes must be approved by the chair or director, dean, and provost.

Students who state that they have a medical reason they cannot attend in-person classes can be referred to Student Accessibility Services. SAS will review documentation and consider each request individually in collaboration with faculty teaching the course.

### How should I handle absences due to COVID-19-related illness or quarantine?

Faculty should use whatever compassionate, learning-outcomes-based attendance policy they normally use.

### I require a medical professional's note from students who miss class due to illness. Is there a way to verify a student's claim that they missed class or assignments because they were in isolation or quarantine?

No. The COG staff is fully engaged with contact tracing and other activities that help reduce the incidence of COVID-19 infections in our community. We suggest that due to the extraordinary circumstances of this global pandemic, instructors offer flexibility and understanding in handling student requests for accommodations due to COVID-19.

### What happens to students who are neither fully vaccinated nor exempted by October 15?

Regarding communication and actions, the Division of Student Life is putting plans in place to notify students of their requirements and to address noncompliance. Only students with determined exemptions will be allowed on campus unvaccinated after October 15.

Regarding the underlying policy, this information is currently posted online for students' information:

*After October 15, 2021, unvaccinated, non-exempt students will not be permitted in classrooms, residence halls, or other University facilities and will not be permitted to participate in on-campus experiences or university activities.*

*Students may be able to continue their education fully remotely if they can do so using already existing remote options (students can apply for an exemption for fully remote learning using the vaccination verification guide); however, many programs or courses do not offer remote options and, depending on degree program or course of study, it may not be possible to complete a course of study through remote learning only. In short, students who are not in compliance by October 15, 2021, will not be able to continue as part of the in-person university community and may also experience a disruption in their education.*

*Students who by October 15, 2021, have started a course of COVID-19 vaccination but are not fully vaccinated (defined as two weeks after the second dose in a two-dose series, such as the Pfizer or Moderna vaccines, or two weeks after a single-dose vaccine, such as Johnson & Johnson's Janssen vaccine), should submit this information through the University of Maine System online COVID-19 vaccination verification portal (External Site). Such students will be permitted to continue their on-campus experience provided they timely become fully vaccinated and comply with public safety protocols to include, for example, masking, regular asymptomatic testing (may include multiple tests per week), and as applicable, quarantine and isolation consistent with University of Maine System standards.*

### I see that students can request vaccination exemptions on the portal now. Do you have any idea how long it takes for exemptions to be processed and approved?

This is expected to be a quick process once approvals begin, which will occur in the very early days of the semester.

### Will there be unvaccinated students on campus after October 15?

Yes, our policy currently allows unvaccinated students on campus after October 15 with approved exemptions based on sincerely held religious belief, or documented medical indications. Exempted students will wear masks indoors and will be subject to frequent testing, with consequences for nonadherence to this protocol.

### Will I be contacted if a student in my class tests positive?

A Contact Tracer will notify faculty if they have been identified as a close contact to a positive student in their class. Contact Tracers are obliged by law to maintain medical confidentiality and cannot release the positive person's name. The Covid Operations Group will contact faculty members and supply them with a script for best practices should extraordinary circumstances (such as two or more positive cases in one class) exist.

### What do I do if a student tells me they have tested positive?

If you or people you know in the UMaine community have concerns about COVID-19 symptoms, close contact, or a positive test, please fill out the online self-reporting form. For more information or assistance, call the COVID-19 info line, 207.581.2681 or email [umaine.alerts@maine.edu](mailto:umaine.alerts@maine.edu). Please be aware that the Covid Operations Group will need to confirm a positive case prior to any contact tracing.

### If I know a student in my class has tested positive, what do I do?

Encourage the student to fill out the online self-reporting form. You may email [umaine.alerts@maine.edu](mailto:umaine.alerts@maine.edu) with the student's name. The COG is fully vetted and FERPA compliant.

### Should I email all of my students if there is a positive covid case in our class?

No. Contact tracers will reach out to close contacts.

### A student contacted me with concerns about their COVID-19 symptoms, close contact, or a positive test. What should I do?

In general, if you or people you know in the UMaine community have concerns about COVID-19 symptoms, close contact, or a positive test, please fill out the online [self-reporting form](#). For more information or assistance, call the COVID-19 info line, 207.581.2681 or email [umaine.alerts@maine.edu](mailto:umaine.alerts@maine.edu).

### I have been in close contact\* with an individual who has COVID-19, but I don't feel sick. Do I need to quarantine? (\*15 or more minutes within 24 hours within 6 feet)

If you are fully vaccinated, you should monitor for symptoms for 14 days and wear a face covering from the time of close contact and get tested within 3-5 days of the close contact. You do not need to quarantine as long as you remain asymptomatic. If you are not fully vaccinated, you should get tested, and should quarantine for 10 days, assuming you remain asymptomatic, and monitor your symptoms for another 4 days. A reminder, a negative test during a quarantine period does not end the need to complete the quarantine period. Testing is available on campus. Visit <https://umaine.edu/return/> for details.

### What happens to individuals (students, faculty, and staff) who are deemed a close contact of a COVID-19 positive individual?

Faculty, staff, and students who are not fully vaccinated and deemed a close contact of a COVID-19 positive individual must quarantine as directed and not return to in-person activities until cleared to do so. Fully vaccinated individuals who are deemed close contacts should monitor their symptoms but do not have to quarantine if they remain asymptomatic. All individuals must isolate if they are COVID-19 positive. We have very limited space available in university locations for on-site quarantine and isolation for students. To request to isolate or quarantine on campus, students must [complete this form](#). Students who cannot be accommodated will be required to quarantine or isolate away from campus. For questions, write [um.reslife@maine.edu](mailto:um.reslife@maine.edu). More information is [online](#).

### Who can I call if I have concerns about COVID-19 cases in my classroom?

Contact Robert Norman at 207-949-5001 or [norman@maine.edu](mailto:norman@maine.edu).

### Do I have to get tested?

University community members with an in-person presence on the campuses or at a university-affiliated facility/research site who are not fully vaccinated and verified, as well as those who have a vaccination exemption, are required to participate in regular testing. Anyone who wishes to be tested may do so. Every week, participants will schedule their test appointment days and times by logging into [PointnClick](#), the University of Maine System online COVID-19 portal (<https://umaineportal.pointnclick.com/home.aspx>) T3 saliva test results are typically available within 36 hours in PointnClick. The UMaine testing location is the ballroom on the first floor of Estabrooke Hall.

### Other helpful information

- IT has updated [remote teaching and learning resources online](#).
- Full vaccination for UMaine community members is verified by uploading vaccination cards in [PointnClick](#).
- The Together for Maine website has a UMS COVID-19 asymptomatic testing summary and a new UMS vaccination verification chart.

