

Subject: Important Health and Safety Updates for the Spring Semester



January 14, 2022

Dear Members of the University Community,

Following up on our recent [announcement about intersession](#), we wanted to provide important updates to the [Royals Back Together Plan](#) for the spring semester. As we have all along, we continue to monitor the progress of the pandemic and may implement additional steps if appropriate.

At this time, the Spring Semester will begin as scheduled with in-person classes starting on Wednesday, January 26.

Booster Shots Required for Students, Faculty and Staff

- Students, faculty and staff who are eligible to get a booster shot ([as determined by the CDC](#)) **must do so no later than Monday, February 28, or two weeks after the date they are eligible, whichever comes later.** Students or employees not eligible by February 28 must receive their booster no later than two weeks after becoming eligible.
- **Students:** Students must confirm receipt of the booster shot by uploading an updated vaccination card to the [Student Health Portal](#). Student Life will provide information shortly about booster resources on campus for students. Students not complying with the booster mandate will be unenrolled from classes without a refund.
- **Faculty and Staff:** Employees must update their attestation statement currently on file with Human Resources through the following link: scranton.edu/vaccine.
- **Exemptions:** Students, faculty and staff who were previously approved for a COVID-19 vaccine exemption are not required to get a booster but must continue to follow all protocols, including weekly testing, masking and social distancing.
 - Students may request a booster waiver in accordance with applicable law. If you have questions about the vaccine requirements, you may contact Student Health Services at vaccines@scranton.edu.
 - Employees can request an exemption from the booster requirement, in accordance with applicable law, by contacting Elizabeth Garcia, Esq., Special Assistant to the President, Executive Director for the Office of Equity and Diversity, and Title IX Coordinator at elizabeth.garcia2@scranton.edu.

COVID-19 Testing Requirements Prior to the Spring Semester

All undergraduate and graduate students who will access campus, regardless of vaccination status, are required to get a PCR test **no earlier than Thursday, January 20**, with results uploaded to the [Student Health Portal](#) **no later than noon on Tuesday, January 25**. Students should schedule their tests as soon as possible. The University is exploring a campus-based

testing option that would be available on a first-come, first served basis for a limited number of people. Additional information will be shared as soon as it is available. Early arrival requests for residential students will not be granted.

Students Testing Positive Over the Past 90 Days: Students who have a confirmed positive test result over the past 90 days (i.e. since October 27) that was previously reported to the University do not need to re-test. If you have not yet reported a positive test, then you can do so through the [Student Health Portal](#).

Student Testing Positive through At-Home Test: Students testing positive using an at-home test can request a reporting form from Student Health Services by emailing vaccines@scranton.edu.

New Mask Requirements

The University continues to require masks in all indoor settings on campus. The following are updates to campus masking requirements:

- **Higher Grade Masks Required:** Higher grade masks (e.g N95, KN95 or KF94) and double masking (e.g. a cloth mask worn over a surgical mask) provide improved protection against the Omicron variant. **Members of the University community, visitors and guests are required to wear a mask that meets this higher standard of protection (i.e. N95, KN95, KF94 or double masking).** The University will have a limited supply of high grade masks available for students and employees, We will continue to monitor community spread and may relax this higher masking standard if possible.
- **Gaiters and Similar Coverings Prohibited:** The University prohibits the use of gaiters, bandanas, scarves, ski masks and balaclavas on campus as protective face coverings for COVID-19. Only higher grade masks or double masking are compliant with the Royals Back Together plan.
- **Enforcement:** All masks should be well-fitted and must cover both the mouth and nose. We will strengthen our efforts to educate the campus community on the importance of mask-wearing and will continue to enforce these efforts throughout campus.
- **Accommodations:**
 - **Students** may [request an accommodation](#) from wearing a mask in accordance with applicable law by contacting the Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence.
 - **Employees** may request an accommodation from wearing a mask in accordance with applicable law by completing the [Request for Reasonable Accommodation and the Medical Information Request](#) forms or by contacting Elizabeth Garcia, Esq., at elizabeth.garcia2@scranton.edu.
 - For certain types of work and work environments on campus, the Office of Human Resources, out of concern for an individual's health and welfare, and in consultation with the Pandemic Safety Officer and applicable divisional vice president, may approve the use of a different grade of mask as needed.

As a reminder, weekly updates will resume again on Monday, January 24, 2022.

From the start, the University has recognized that the challenge to keep each other safe through this pandemic is a shared responsibility shaped by individual decisions. We encourage all of you to continue to take steps to keep yourselves, the University community and our region safe and healthy in the coming semester.

We want to thank the leadership of various campus constituent groups for their input and support in developing these updates.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Robert W. Davis Jr., Ed.D.
Vice President for Student Life

Jeff Gingerich, Ph.D.
Provost/Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

Patricia Tetreault
Vice President for Human Resources