

August 11, 2021
Subject: Royals Back Together: A Plan for Fall 2021



Dear Members of the University Community,

Since May, the University has been clear in its intention to return to a fully in-person living and learning experience on campus for the fall. We have already announced various important steps and requirements that are intended to achieve this goal, especially the requirement that all students and employees be fully vaccinated by August 27, unless they are approved for an exemption.

The Plan for Fall 2021

At this time, we are pleased to announce our plan for the fall semester: **Royals Back Together**. The plan builds on the success of its predecessor, Royals Safe Together, and reflects the most recent guidance available from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and the Pennsylvania Department of Health. The Royals Back Together plan **begins with Welcome Weekend on August 28-29, preceding the start of the classes on Monday, August 30.**

The full plan is available on the [Royals Back Together website](#). Key sections of the plan include the following:

- [Campus health and safety requirements](#) for vaccinated individuals and for unvaccinated individuals with an approved exemption. Specifically,
 - **Indoor mask requirements** for unvaccinated individuals with an approved exemption and the **potential for similar requirements** for vaccinated individuals based on the level of community spread.
 - **Entry testing** requirements for unvaccinated students with an approved exemption and ongoing **surveillance testing** and **symptom monitoring** for all unvaccinated individuals with an approved exemption.
- A tiered approach to [public and other access](#) to campus based on the level of community spread in Lackawanna and surrounding counties.
- Guidance for [University travel](#) and recommendations for personal travel as well as for University [meetings and events](#).

The pandemic remains a serious health issue in the United States and across the globe. As current headlines and our own past experience suggest, **we must be ready to adapt our plans to changing circumstances and guidance.**

Most recently, for example, the CDC revised its mask guidance for vaccinated individuals, especially in areas of the country experiencing substantial or high community spread. The University will monitor community spread and introduce more stringent requirements as necessary.

The plan website also includes a [Frequently Asked Questions page](#).

Reminder: Mask Requirements for Summer 2021 Remain in Place

- **Indoors:** Masks are **required** for all indoor spaces **regardless of vaccination status** for students employees, visitors and guests (e.g. camp and conference attendees, contractors, etc.).
- **Employees** isolated in their personal office space or work area, when unshared with any other colleagues, do not need to wear a mask. However, when the employee leaves their individual office or work area or has invited a colleague into their office, they must wear a mask.
- **Students and guests** staying in University residence halls must follow the guidance provided on the following webpage: [Face Coverings in Residence Halls](#).
- **Outdoors:** Fully vaccinated individuals are not required to wear masks outside. Individuals who are not fully vaccinated must wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact with other people who are not fully vaccinated.
- Individuals are free to continue wearing masks at all times should they wish to do so.

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