

Dear Students—

We are writing to give you an update from the Educational Infection Prevention (IP) Team and to share changes to the protocols related to:

- Masking Guidelines
- Student Gatherings
- Travel Registry

Because the school has a COVID-19 student vaccine mandate, the student body has a high degree of protection from severe COVID-19 infection. However vaccinated individuals can acquire asymptomatic or mild to moderately symptomatic infection. Robust data, prior to the emergence of the delta variant, showed that transmission from vaccinated individuals who test positive is unlikely; however more [recent data on the delta variant](#) supports the fact that transmission may be possible among vaccinated individuals. This possibility of transmission requires further investigation. **Vaccination remains the most essential public health tool with data clearly showing decreased infections, symptoms, hospitalizations and deaths among the vaccinated.**

We are committed to your safety and the safety of everyone in our communities. New York City is seeing increased transmission of SARS-CoV-2 virus, spurred on by the delta variant. There are members of our collective community who have not yet been approved for vaccination: children under 12 and others, particularly our patients, who may not respond to their vaccination with robust immunologic protection. Thus, we must continue to prioritize our collective health and remain vigilant. In this dynamic situation, with our scientific knowledge constantly expanding, we all need to remain nimble.

VACCINATIONS

ISMMS requires COVID-19 vaccination for all new and continuing students in all programs, for academic year 2021-2022. Your ID badge will have a sticker to acknowledge your compliance with this important public health measure. This sticker is required to access educational spaces. You can pick up your sticker at the following locations:

- Medical Students: Stickers will be available in Annenberg 13-30, Tuesdays 1-5 pm and Wednesdays 9 am-1pm.
 - **AFTER HOURS: Students can also pick up stickers in Annenberg 13-30 between 6pm and 8pm on the following days - August 5th and August 9th-12th.**

- Graduate Students: Stickers are available in the Annenberg - Graduate School Offices (5th Floor) on Tuesdays from 10am-4pm and from the Aron Hall 1st Floor Student Affairs Suite on Wednesdays between 10 am-4 pm.

MASKING GUIDELINES (NEW)

In line with recent CDC recommendations for areas [currently identified](#) as having substantial COVID-19 transmission—which includes New York City—the Mount Sinai Health System has reinstated universal masking policies. Everyone must wear masks at all times in educational spaces as well as in laboratories, clinical spaces, and institutional public spaces. Please see the [masking and distancing guidelines](#) for the educational spaces. These are consistent with [Mount Sinai Institutional policies](#). Students in clinical arenas must adhere to the clinical policies overseeing those specific spaces.

GATHERINGS (NEW)

Student gatherings for interest groups, club meetings, affinity groups and other extracurricular activities should adhere to the updated school [gathering policy](#).

STUDENT HEALTH

Symptomatic students should stay home and call Student Health or their personal physician. **If you have had a known COVID exposure or a positive test, it is imperative to inform Student Health immediately** so that we can guide you in best practice and/or help you to coordinate a COVID test as needed.

Student Health Services

17 E 102nd Street, 4th Floor

Phone: 212-241-6023

COVID-related Concerns: StudentCovidResponse@mssm.edu

General Inquiries: studenthealth@mssm.edu

ASYMPTOMATIC TESTING

Mount Sinai Employee Health Services offers asymptomatic PCR saliva testing for all Mount Sinai community members. Tests can be scheduled as frequently as once a month.

To schedule a test:

- Click on [this link](#)
- Choose your preferred location (Mount Sinai Hospital EHS @ Annenberg 3rd floor if you are on the main campus)

- Select “Asymptomatic COVID-19 PCR Saliva Testing for Employees.” You will see a drop down menu with dates and times available for testing

TRAVEL (NEW)

If you travel, you should fully evaluate the [rate of positive tests](#) and [vaccination rate](#) of your destination to determine level of risk. Due to the increased rates of COVID-19, we have re-instituted the following travel policies:

- Students who travel (for personal or professional reasons) to a destination **outside the Northeast (outside NY, NJ, CT, MA, PA, VT, ME, DE, RI, NH, DC, MD) must:**
 - **Complete** the [Student Travel Registration Form](#) at least one week prior to departure so we can support your safe return to our community with **testing and masking**.
 - **Get a PCR** test at Mount Sinai on day 3-5 after your return. Self-schedule your test through the [asymptomatic testing link](#). We are following the numbers regularly and are particularly concerned about destinations with a vaccination rate (at least one dose) below 60 percent or a test positivity rate above 5%. These recommendations will likely evolve.
- Students are **discouraged** from traveling **internationally**. **Students who do travel internationally must:**
 - **Complete** the [Student Travel Registration Form](#) at least one week prior to departure
 - Follow the re-entry **testing and quarantine strategy per the IP team recommendations. These recommendations will vary depending upon your travel destination**. Please be aware of all [CDC requirements](#) for the country you are traveling to and from.

These IP protocols change on a regular basis as the science and the epidemiology evolves. We thank you for your partnership as we all navigate together and all work to remain well physically and emotionally.

You can find the most up-to-date policies, guidelines, and information on the [COVID-19 Infection Prevention Blackboard page](#).

If you have questions, please contact the Educational Infection Prevention Team at StudentInfectionPrevention@lists.mssm.edu.

Sincerely,

Dr. Valerie Parkas
Dr. Beverly Forsyth
Dr. Darinka Gadikota-Klumpers

The ISMMS Education Infection Prevention Team

Aum Patel (MD-PhD candidate)
Mimi Frisch (MD candidate, Class of 2024)

Student Council Infection Prevention Representatives