



Memo: COVID-19 guideline updates for spring 2022

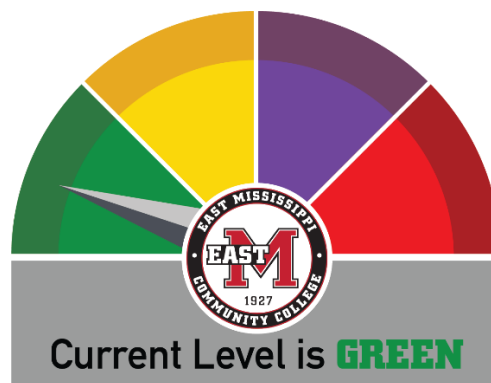
Date: January 5, 2022

To: EMCC Faculty, Staff, and Students

From: Scott Alsobrooks, Ph.D.

I hope each of you had a restful and relaxing break and are ready for a phenomenal spring semester. As you all know, we are resuming normal operations for Spring 2022; however, due to the significant increase in COVID-19 cases, I wanted to provide some updates as we return to campus. At this time, we will continue to follow the spring calendar as posted. All meeting rooms, classrooms, open facilities, on-campus events, and auditoriums will remain at 100% capacity. As we have seen over the last several weeks, the new COVID-19 variant (Omicron) has been a leading factor resulting in an increase in the number of new cases. We still encourage all EMCC faculty, staff, and students to take the necessary precautions to protect themselves and others, including encouraging the EMCC community to get vaccinated against COVID-19.

EMCC will continue to utilize the following operational system to inform our campus community of its COVID-19 level of operation. **Our current level of operation is green; however, due to rising case numbers, faculty and staff have the discretion to require students, peers, and visitors to wear a mask in their classroom, office space, or conference room.** Faculty and Staff, if you need additional face masks and/or cleaning supplies for your office or classroom, please stop by your respective instructional dean's office or dean of student's office. Students who need a face mask may also stop by your respective dean of students' office. Below is a reminder of the operation protocols.



### **Green COVID-19 Level of Emergency Operation**

Green is the lowest level of emergency operation. This level encourages handwashing and proper hygiene, as well as proper cleaning of personal work areas.

- Masks are optional but encouraged indoors and in close contact with others
- Increased handwashing protocols are encouraged
- Increased cleaning of personal work areas and classroom space
- Self-evaluation of symptoms
- Required reporting of possible contacts and confirmed COVID-19 infections to Nurse Amy Ivy ([click here](#))

### **Yellow COVID-19 Level of Emergency Operation**

Yellow represents an enhanced threat. This level encourages social distancing and masks for close contact moments.

- Recommended social distancing, when possible
- Increased handwashing protocols are recommended
- Masks required indoors at all EMCC facilities
- Remove self-serve options in all dining facilities
- Recommend virtual meetings for all employee activity, when social distancing can't be implemented
- Recommended modified campus events to include enhanced COVID-19 safety protocols
- Enhanced cleaning of all surfaces and facilities is required
- Required reporting of possible contacts and confirmed COVID-19 infections to Nurse Amy Ivy ([click here](#))

### **Purple COVID-19 Level of Emergency Operation**

Purple represents a heightened COVID-19 threat. This level requires social distancing, masks for all indoor facilities, altered classroom and employee working patterns, modified dining areas, and limited access to campus for students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

- Social distancing is required for all indoor and outdoor activities
- Masks required indoors at all EMCC facilities
- Enhanced cleaning of all surfaces and facilities
- On-campus housing visitation is suspended
- Health Screening Stations in operation on all campuses
- Implement the use of health screening
- Modified learning models implemented (virtual or hybrid)
- Modified employee work schedules (virtual or hybrid)
- Limited in-person on-campus events
- All sporting events will operate according to the MACCC guidelines
- To-go option only at all dining facilities
- Limited public access to campus facilities
- Required reporting of possible contacts and confirmed COVID-19 infections to Nurse Amy Ivy ([click here](#))

## **Red COVID-19 Level of Emergency Operation**

Red represents the highest level of COVID-19 threat. Level Red would require all in-person operations to stop.

- All campus access would be stopped until further notice
- All on-campus housing residents would be required to vacate campus housing
- The virtual learning model would be implemented for all courses
- Virtual work from home would be in place for designated employees
- Monitored entrance and exit to campus
- Required reporting of possible contacts and confirmed COVID-19 infections to Nurse Amy Ivy ([click here](#))

In addition to the above operational levels, all local, state, and federal guidelines will be implemented as directed.

Below are guidelines you should be aware of as we move forward.

1. Vaccinations are readily available throughout the state of Mississippi. Accordingly, EMCC encourages students, faculty, and staff to get the COVID-19 vaccination through a healthcare provider of your choice. The MSDH website says: Vaccination offers excellent protection against illness, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19. Vaccines are readily available across our communities, and you can find a vaccine by visiting [www.vaccines.gov](http://www.vaccines.gov). Local health clinics, physicians, pharmacies, and providers also offer COVID-19 vaccination.
2. We encourage EMCC faculty, staff, and students to get vaccinated at a provider of your choice. We will host free vaccination clinics on campus during the spring semester for those who cannot do so. Nurse Amy Ivy will be conducting COVID-19 testing. Nurse Ivy will disseminate testing information via email.
3. Maintain proactive personal health practices, including washing hands frequently with soap and water or hand sanitizer, especially after touching often used items or surfaces; refraining from touching your face; sneezing or coughing into a tissue or the inside of your elbow; and disinfecting frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible.

#### 4. Guidance for exposure from the CDC:

##### If You Test Positive for COVID-19 (Isolate)

Everyone, regardless of vaccination status.

- Stay home for 5 days.
- If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you can leave your house.
- Continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.

*If you have a fever, continue to stay home until your fever resolves.*

##### If You Were Exposed to Someone with COVID-19 (Quarantine)

**If you:**

Have been boosted

**OR**

Completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last 6 months

**OR**

Completed the primary series of J&J vaccine within the last 2 months

- Wear a mask around others for 10 days.
- Test on day 5, if possible.

*If you develop symptoms get a test and stay home.*

**If you:**

Completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine over 6 months ago and are not boosted

**OR**

Completed the primary series of J&J over 2 months ago and are not boosted

**OR**

Are unvaccinated

- Stay home for 5 days. After that continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.
- If you can't quarantine you must wear a mask for 10 days.
- Test on day 5 if possible.

*If you develop symptoms get a test and stay home*

For more detailed information regarding quarantine and isolation, click [here](#).

5. Unless traveling to an area with travel restrictions, all COVID-19 traveling restrictions may return to normal. Individuals should be aware of the conditions at their destination and their mode of transportation.
6. EMCC will continue to have temperature stations, sanitization stations, masks, and other resources available to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Those who want or need a mask and additional supplies may contact your respective dean of students' office.
7. Students are expected to attend all classes, labs, and clinical as prescribed. Students are solely responsible for keeping up with their attendance. Because of the uncertainties of the COVID-19 pandemic and other unknowns, students should stay up-to-date with their

attendance and assignments. If you can't attend class, communicate with your instructors as soon as possible. If circumstances require an absence, then students should note that all absences are either excused or unexcused.

- Excused absences are those incurred when students miss class due to:
  - a. personal illness;
  - b. immediate family illness;
  - b. death in the family;
  - c. inclement weather;
  - d. officially representing the college;
  - e. serving on jury duty;
  - f. participating in military activities;
  - g. fulfilling approved legal requirements.
  
- All other reasons for missing class are considered unexcused, including, but not limited to, transportation problems, work, or vacation. These situations are why students are allowed a certain number of unexcused absences, and these should not be wasted.
  
- An instructor reserves the right to verify the validity of an excuse submitted by a student, for example, a doctor's excuse, legal notes, etc. This documentation must be presented to the instructor at the class meeting following the absence. Failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence.

NOTE: We will continue to monitor information from the National Center for Disease Control and Prevention and the Mississippi State Department of Health and comply with issued mandates when feasible.