Maintain a Positive Outlook
As we approach another semester, we see in the State of Alabama an increase in COVID-19 cases. Unfortunately, while we hoped to return this Fall as “business as usual,” we recognize the need to issue a protocol for procedures and practices we deem important to the safety of our employees and students. With hopes that vaccine numbers will increase as people exercise personal responsibility, thus minimizing the number of positive COVID-19 cases, the College continues to monitor guidelines issued by the CDC, the Governor’s Office, and the Alabama Community College System Office. Further updates will be sent as the semester progresses based on trends related to this pandemic.

Requirements for Students and Employees on Campus
College personnel have worked to identify specific measures to help ensure the safety of students, faculty, and staff. All are required to follow this protocol or may be subject to disciplinary action.

Disclaimer
All measures listed in this protocol are subject to change at any time due to state or health agency updates on the COVID-19 pandemic.
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HEALTH & SAFETY

Directives from the Governor’s Office and Public Health Agencies
Coastal Alabama Community College will continue to observe directives from the Governor’s Office, the guidance issued by Public Health Agencies (e.g. CDC, ADPH) and public health conditions locally in administering instruction and activities.

Personal Responsibility:
While Coastal Alabama Community College strives to protect its students and employees, it is the personal responsibility of these individuals to do their part to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Reporting accurate information, getting the vaccine and/or getting tested regularly for COVID-19, and practicing cleanliness to the greatest extent are critical in minimizing the spread of the virus. All individuals must follow the guidelines set forth in this protocol.

Cleaning and Disinfecting:
Coastal Alabama Community College outsources custodial services. Those companies have provided the College with their disinfection practices to minimize the spread of COVID-19 (See Appendix A). Chemicals being used to disinfect are on the Environmental Protection Agencies’ approved disinfectants list. Cleaning strategies will be followed based on the CDC’s guidance.

Communications Plan:
The College will use the Coastal News and Coastal Student News platforms to send notifications and updates to all faculty, staff and students. Notifications sent through the Coastal News and Coastal Student News groups generate e-mails to the individuals’ College e-mail accounts. Additionally, the College will continue to update the COVID-19 website with updates and will share updates on the College’s official social media accounts.

Public Information
The College has a COVID-19 webpage dedicated to updates on the virus and College operations.

Facial Coverings/Masks:
Facial coverings/masks are required indoors on all campuses until further notice. For certain Career Technical programs, such as Welding and Aviation, facial coverings will be suitable for the specific lab setting. For athletics, guidelines for facial coverings/masks are issued from the Alabama Community College Conference.

Supply Acquisition:
The College has purchased and will maintain a supply of disposable masks and sanitizer for instructor, staff, and student use to distribute as needed. These supplies will be ordered by the Facilities Office.

Other PPE relevant to a particular program will be acquired and stocked normally by each program director.
VACCINATIONS

Vaccination is the leading prevention strategy to protect individuals from the COVID-19 disease and end the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 vaccine significantly reduces the potential of severe illness, hospitalizations, and death. According to the CDC, COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective, and everyone 12 years of age and older is now eligible to get a free COVID-19 vaccination.

Pursuant to state law, the Alabama Community College System and its colleges will not mandate the COVID vaccine as a condition of attendance or employment, but vaccination is strongly encouraged for all students, faculty, and staff.

On July 26, 2021, the Alabama Attorney General issued a Public Notice summarizing Alabama law relating to COVID-19 vaccination requirements and proof of vaccination requirements as set out in Act 2021-493. The Public Notice makes clear that no government, school, or business in Alabama may demand that a constituent, student, or customer, respectively, be vaccinated for COVID-19 or show proof of his or her vaccination for COVID-19.

A student may be asked if they have been vaccinated for COVID-19 and asked to provide proof of their vaccination. However, a student may not be REQUIRED to report their COVID-19 vaccination status or to provide proof of their vaccination.
MASK WEARING AND PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Coastal Alabama Community College requires individuals to wear a face covering or mask indoors regardless of vaccination status per the CDC’s latest guidance.

Nearly all Alabama counties are categorized as “Very High Risk” per the Alabama Department of Public Health. In coordination with local health officials, the College will continue to monitor local conditions and consider additional precautions as appropriate.
COVID-19 EXPOSURE
NOTIFICATION, QUARANTINE, AND ISOLATION

Definitions:
- **Close contact** is defined as within 6 feet of an infected person (laboratory-confirmed) for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.
- **Fully-vaccinated** is defined as people who are 2 weeks after their second dose in a 2-dose series or 2 weeks after a single-dose vaccine.

**SHOWING SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19 REGARDLESS OF VACCINE STATUS**

Persons arriving to campus with signs or symptoms of COVID-19:
Should a faculty/staff or student arrive to campus exhibiting signs or symptoms of COVID-19 (e.g. fever, cough, and shortness of breath), the College will ask the person to leave campus and consult a healthcare provider before returning to campus. Further guidance is listed below regarding when someone can return to campus.

Per the CDC and the Alabama Department of Public Health, retesting is not recommended within three months after the date of symptom onset for the initial COVID-19 infection.

**PERSONS WITH POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST RESULTS WITH SYMPTOMS**

Persons can return to campus:
- 10 days after symptoms first appeared and
- 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving (For example: cough, shortness of breath. Please note, loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation)

**PERSONS WITH POSITIVE COVID-19 TEST RESULTS WITHOUT SYMPTOMS**

Persons can return to campus after 10 days have passed since he/she had a positive viral test for COVID-19 if the person continues to have no symptoms. If the person develops symptoms, they should follow the protocol for “Persons with Positive COVID-19 Test Results with Symptoms”.

PERSONS WITH EXPOSURE TO COVID-19

Fully-vaccinated persons with exposure to COVID-19 should get tested 3-5 days after exposure, regardless of whether they exhibit symptoms. Fully-vaccinated persons should also wear a face covering/mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until a COVID-19 test result is negative.

Non-vaccinated persons who have had close contact with someone with COVID-19 should stay home for 14 days after their last exposure to that person unless that person meets the following criteria:

- The person has been fully vaccinated and shows no symptoms of COVID-19

OR

- Person had COVID-19 illness within the previous 3 months and
- has recovered and
- Remains without COVID-19 symptoms (for example cough, shortness of breath).
STUDENT SERVICES

For in-person activities, the following guidelines are in place:

- Masks or face coverings are required indoors.
- The Student Services Department staff will adhere to recommended hygiene and mask/facial covering policies and will assist facilities staff in sanitizing surfaces and high-touch locations in the Student Success Center and in student services areas as recommended by College administration, state, and federal authorities.
- Student Services Department staff will practice hand sanitation as recommended by College administration, state, and federal authorities.
- Staff and custodial services will sanitize appointment areas and office surfaces.
- Accessible areas of the building will be cleaned and disinfected daily. Entrance/exit doors will be sanitized at least twice a day.

Athletics
The College is following the COVID-19 guidelines as issued by the Alabama Community College Conference and the NJCAA.

The College acknowledges ongoing conversations pertaining to delaying or rescheduling certain teams/games. Coastal Alabama Community College will follow whatever guidelines are issued by the ACCC.

On-Campus Housing
The following are the practices and policies for the operation of Lakeview Apartments (Brewton), Sun Chief Hall (Bay Minette) and Thompson Hall (Bay Minette).

Sun Chief Hall and Thompson Hall on the Bay Minette Campus will open for the general student body. The College will hold a set number of rooms to be used for quarantine purposes based on trends of the pandemic.

Lakeview Apartments on the Brewton Campus will be open for students. Lakeview Apartments will reserve a set number of apartments to be used for isolation/quarantine areas based on trends of the pandemic.

Move-In:

- Residents moving in will be allowed a maximum of two individuals in the residence halls/apartments to help them move their items.

No outside guests will be allowed in the residence halls for Fall 2021. Additionally, residents will only be allowed in the residence hall in which they live. They may not visit another residence hall. Students will be subject to disciplinary action, up to expulsion and no refund of dorm cost, if they do not follow guidance from College officials in the Housing Office.

Sanitation Policies:

- Hand sanitizer dispensers will be placed at each entrance and throughout the halls/apartment complex where there are high contact points (i.e. laundry facilities).
- The number of individuals allowed in the Computer Lab and Kitchen areas will be limited, and they will be provided disinfecting wipes to sanitize equipment before and after usage.
• Resident Assistants will continue room inspections every week. Inspections are to ensure beds and furniture have not been moved, thus violating distancing efforts. They are also implemented to ensure cleaning and disinfecting protocols are being followed.
• Roommates and suitemates will complete a cleaning schedule for common areas. Resident Assistants and staff will receive a copy of the schedule and monitor the adherence of the schedule by all residents.
• Custodial staff will increase sanitation of common areas by wiping hard surfaces and major contact points in the common areas (door handles, stair railings, elevator buttons, etc).
• Staff and residents will be required to wear masks in common areas and staff must use a mask and gloves when entering a resident’s room.

Other Policies
• Residents will not be allowed to move rooms or swap roommates unless for emergencies.
• Non-residential staff, outside guests/visitors, and overnight guests will not be allowed to access the building to follow guidelines recommended by College administration, state, and federal authorities.
• The College will increase health and safety signage throughout all living areas.
• The College will restrict the number of people in Common Areas (Lobbies, Game Rooms, Computer Labs, etc)

Food Services
Food services provided on campus will follow county and state health and safety guidelines.
EMPLOYEE PROTOCOLS

LEAVE

Employees who must be out of the office due to COVID-19 exposure or confirmed cases must use his/her own leave for the time missed out of the office.

TELEWORKING/REMOTE WORK

Effective immediately, the College does not offer remote or telework as an employee-requested option to COVID-19 quarantine or isolation periods when the employee is COVID-19 positive, has symptoms of COVID-19, or has had close contact exposure to a positive COVID-19 case. This is regardless of vaccine status.

Any employee who is COVID-19 positive, has symptoms of COVID-19, or has had close contact exposure to a positive COVID-19 case shall not come to work and shall isolate as recommended by the CDC or quarantine as required by a health provider. Employees shall take sick leave or other appropriate leave in these cases and strictly adhere to the College's leave policies.

There are certain essential jobs and functions that may require the College to seek remote work from an employee who is taking leave related to COVID-19 reasons. If the College needs remote assistance during an employee’s COVID-19 leave period, the College will initiate contact with the employee on leave to see if the employee is willing and able to assist remotely as the needs of the College dictate. If the isolating or quarantining employee remotely assists during their leave period as requested by the College, the employee will be temporarily approved for that specific remote work which was requested by the College and paid for such work. The president approves all instances regarding telework or remote work.

Faculty should follow the Instructional Services protocol below.

TRAVEL

College-sponsored domestic travel is allowable at the discretion of the president. Employees should follow the College’s standard operating procedures for requesting travel in-state or out-of-state.

College-sponsored international travel continues to be prohibited, except as approved by the Chancellor of the Alabama Community College System.

If you travel in the United States, you do not need to get tested before or after travel or self-quarantine after travel. If you travel, you should still take steps to protect yourself and others. Wearing a mask over your nose and mouth is required on planes, buses, trains, and other forms of public transportation traveling into, within, or out of the United States and while indoors at U.S. transportation hubs such as airports and stations.
INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES

As cases of COVID-19 continue to rise in the College’s service areas, instructional services has adopted a contingency plan for the 2021-2022 academic year for instructors who are ill with COVID-19, who serve as caregivers for someone who is ill with COVID-19, or who have been directly exposed to someone with COVID-19.

Instructors are required to report any change in schedule due to COVID-19 to their division chair and department director.

Instructors must choose one of the following options below to ensure continuity of instruction:

Option A – Positive COVID-19 Test

The instructor provides documentation of a positive COVID-19 diagnosis for himself/herself or for someone for whom he/she is a caregiver.

- The instructor files leave.
- The instructor posts at least one assignment in Canvas per week for the students to complete to document activity in the course.
- The instructor is not required to work remotely.
- If the instructor is unable to return to work after two weeks, the appropriate instructional officer will default to the Emergency Plan.

Option B – Positive COVID-19 Test or Exposure

The instructor falls within one of the following categories:

- The instructor provides documentation of a positive COVID-19 diagnosis for himself/herself.
- The instructor provides documentation of a positive COVID-19 diagnosis for someone for whom he/she is a caregiver.
- The instructor provides documentation that he/she has had direct exposure to someone with COVID-19 and current CDC guidelines or medically-provided documentation require quarantining. Patient identifiers could be removed from the documentation, but the date of testing must remain. (Note: If documentation cannot be obtained, the instructor would need to take leave.)

Then,

- The instructor is able to work and requests to work remotely. On a case-by-case basis as approved by the president, the instructor may be granted to work remotely temporarily. In this case, the instructor is not required to take leave.
- The instructor maintains his/her same daily schedule, including office hours, in a virtual format.
- The instructor conducts seated courses and hybrid on-campus class sessions as regularly scheduled, but remotely. Students will meet on campus at the regularly
scheduled day/time of class. Class meetings may be held in the designated distance education classroom on each campus, and the campus director or designee will coordinate and facilitate the class sessions.

- If the instructor is unable to return to campus after two weeks, the instructor's situation will be re-evaluated. The appropriate instructional officer will determine whether the Emergency Plan needs to be utilized.

**Emergency Plan**
- If it is immediately deemed that the instructor is not able to continue teaching the course or after an instructor has been on leave for two weeks and it is determined that he/she is unable to return to work, the appropriate instructional officer will coordinate with the director and division chair to identify a properly credentialed substitute for the course.
- The need for the continued use of the substitute will be re-evaluated weekly, if necessary, dependent on the return of the instructor.