



**SPRING 2022 COVID-19 PROTOCOL**  
**Updated January 5, 2022**

**Maintain a Positive Outlook**

We optimistically enter the Spring 2022 semester with hope that the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to dwindle. Of course, we are aware of new variants of the virus. We continue to monitor the Alabama Department of Public Health's and the CDC's websites for guidance and updates. Approaching two years since the discovery of COVID-19, we have increased our understanding of personal health and wellness and the personal responsibility we all carry to continue to minimize the effects of the virus.

**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. 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 not required for Spring 2022. For certain programs, facial coverings may be encouraged based on policies of the College's partners (i.e. clinical sites for allied health programs). 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 cleaning products 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. The COVID-19 vaccine significantly reduces the potential of severe illness, hospitalizations, and death. According to the CDC, COVID-19 vaccines and boosters are safe and effective.

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 vaccinations and booster shots are 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. Exceptions to this may exist in allied health programs where partnering facilities may require vaccination status before students are allowed into such facilities.

## **MASK WEARING AND PHYSICAL DISTANCING**

Coastal Alabama Community College does not require individuals to wear a face covering or mask indoors for Spring 2022. Masks may be encouraged for those non-vaccinated to enhance protection from the virus.

# **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**

Everyone, regardless of vaccination status, shall:

- Stay home for 5 days
- If there are no symptoms or symptoms are resolving after 5 days, individual may return to campus/work. The individual should test, if practicable, prior to returning to work.
- Individual shall wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.

Note: If the individual has a fever, they should continue to stay home until the fever resolves.

## **PERSONS WITH EXPOSURE TO COVID-19**

Persons who are fully vaccinated within the last 6 months OR have been boosted shall:

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

Persons who are fully vaccinated over 6 months ago and are not boosted or are unvaccinated shall:

- Stay home for 5 days. After that, continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.
- Test on day 5, if possible.

If symptoms occur, individuals should immediately quarantine until a negative test confirms their symptoms are not attributable to COVID-19.

## **STUDENT SERVICES**

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

- The Student Services Department staff will adhere to recommended hygiene 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 Spring 2022. 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.

- 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).

#### 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**

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 vaccination 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 quarantine/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 Coastal Alabama's president and 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 may be 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.