

OneVCU

BETTER TOGETHER

Dear VCU faculty and staff,

Together, the VCU community made this academic year a success. Now, with COVID-19 cases declining and vaccinations rising, it is time to prepare for a robust and engaged on-campus learning, living and working experience this fall. As we prepare, we continue putting your health, safety and well-being at the forefront of every decision.

The following decisions were made with input from VCU's Public Health Response Team and the VCU community. They are consistent with guidance from the Virginia Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American College Health Association and decisions announced by peer institutions in Virginia. Please be kind and patient with one another as we adjust to this new phase together as One VCU.

Vaccination

Vaccines are now widely available and have proven to be some of the safest, most reliable and effective vaccines in history. Public health experts tell us that vaccination is the best way to help keep ourselves and our community safe.

If you have not yet received your COVID-19 vaccination, you can make an appointment on-campus through [University Student Health Services](#) (students), by calling VCU Employee Health at (804) 828-0584 (employees) or at a provider near you (search vaccine availability at www.vaccines.gov).

- **Students:** Vaccination **will be required** for all students who live, learn, work or will be on campus for any reason (excluding those with religious or health exemptions). Survey results show strong majorities of students, parents, faculty and staff support this requirement. Students attending fall classes must report their vaccination to [University Student Health Services](#) no later than July 15; Health Sciences students and those taking summer classes should receive and report their vaccinations sooner, if possible. Students who receive a two-dose vaccination must report completion of both doses. This requirement will allow our students to safely learn, live, gather and experience college at its best. For more information about full

vaccination, documentation requirements, religious and health exemptions, and vaccine manufacturers, see the [student vaccine FAQ](#).

- **Employees:** The university strongly encourages our employees to follow the guidance of the Public Health Response Team in choosing to be vaccinated as soon as possible. All full- and part-time VCU faculty and staff who have not already reported their vaccine must [complete the following survey](#) by July 15 to report their vaccination status to the university. For more information, see the [vaccine FAQ for faculty and staff](#).
- Students and employees who are unvaccinated or exempt from vaccination must follow safety guidelines for their health and for the health of our community, including but not limited to: wearing a mask, routine surveillance testing, completing daily health checks, and continuing to follow public safety measures including quarantine procedures. [Entry Pass](#) requirements will apply and will allow entry if public health measures are followed.
- Students and employees who are vaccinated, and report their vaccination to VCU, are exempt from masking, daily health checks, surveillance testing and quarantine requirements. [Entry Pass](#) requirements will apply; however, your Entry Pass will default to a green check.

Public health and safety measures (effective immediately)

[Governor Ralph Northam's Executive Order 79](#), effective as of midnight on May 28, lifted many of the restrictions we have been operating under during the pandemic and signifies significant progress in the fight against COVID-19. The following changes are consistent with the changes in the executive order and are effective immediately.

- **Physical distancing:** There are no longer physical distancing requirements or density restrictions in campus spaces. This is applicable to classes, events, meetings, research laboratories and gatherings. Facilities and signage will be updated over the summer to reflect this change. Although classrooms are currently set at 66 percent capacity for the fall semester, colleges and schools may increase course capacity as needed. Unvaccinated community members and visitors must [follow CDC guidelines for indoor and outdoor activities](#).
- **Masks:** Masks are not required for those who are vaccinated, but remain required for those who are not vaccinated and required for everyone (vaccinated or unvaccinated) in the following settings:
 - Congregate housing: Specifically, masks are required in all common areas of VCU residence halls
 - Health care settings at VCU (e.g., University Student Health Services, University Counseling, VCU Health System owned, operated or leased spaces, etc.)

- Whenever accommodations for immune-compromised community members may be necessary
- Vaccinated community members who wish to wear a mask out of an abundance of caution are encouraged to do so.
- Contact tracing, surveillance testing and enhanced cleaning will continue throughout the fall semester. Masks, hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies will be available in vending machines and common areas. The MYCOVID call center, which can be reached at 804-MYCOVID (804-692-6843), will remain operational and continue to connect VCU community members to testing and quarantine/isolation guidance.

A phased transition to on-campus work (begins this summer)

- With input from employees, constituency group leaders and leadership, VCU Human Resources developed guidelines for staff that outline a phased and flexible transition to supporting the in-person experience this fall.
- This includes updated guidelines for continued flexible work arrangements and expectations for roles that support the in-person experience. In short, these guidelines are designed to support supervisors and university employees working together over the coming weeks and months to best meet the needs of the university as well as the employee. While they support university goals, they also reflect the need for ongoing work-life balance and well-being.
- For a timeline and other details, visit together.vcu.edu/fall-2021-info/timeline. Your leadership is committed to implementing these guidelines equitably and consistently, and will communicate additional details.

The responsibility you demonstrated over the past year proves that we as the VCU community can face and overcome the most difficult challenges. While we know VCU can safely and successfully navigate this new phase together, we all must remain flexible. Should conditions change, or should new information require us to pivot again, we will.

Please continue to monitor the [One VCU: Better Together](https://together.vcu.edu) website and email updates for the most current information about university operations.

Our community has proven that we're responsible together – showing respect and care for each other. Continuing to do so will allow us to be *Better Together* this fall. Thank you for all you continue to do to take care of yourself and each other.

Sincerely,

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