MINNESOTA STATE

Updated guidance regarding COVID

May 21, 2021

From the beginning of the pandemic, we approached our comprehensive preparedness plan as a system, one that met the needs of all our colleges and universities. We continue to follow the Governor's Executive Orders and the guidance from CDC and MDH.

We expect MDH will update their current guidance for Institutions of Higher Education on or around May 28th. This will provide information for fall planning considering the change in Executive Orders and CDC guidance.

Mask Wearing

Governor Walz's Executive Order 21-23 states that all people who have not been vaccinated are strongly encouraged to wear a face covering in accordance with MDH and CDC recommendations until they are fully vaccinated. Note the shift from "Must Wear" to "Are Encouraged to Wear." This shift in guidance means that campuses cannot require, but can encourage, such measures as getting vaccinated and continuing to practice good public health behaviors. Individuals are welcome to continue wearing masks. We are consulting with MDH and will be creating poster templates with these encouragements that campuses can use or modify to fit your brands.

Campuses located in municipalities that establish their own jurisdiction-wide mask mandate may require masking to be in alignment with the local requirements, and it is expected that the campus consult with the system office.

Vaccinations

Minnesota State is following the guidance from the State of Minnesota and Minnesota Department of Health on vaccinations of our students and employees. Currently the State of Minnesota is not requiring vaccinations. We are, however, strongly encouraging our employees and students to get vaccinated. In addition, a number of our colleges and universities have been working with MDH to offer vaccination clinics to their faculty, staff, students, and campus communities, and are developing strategies to offer additional clinics prior to fall term.

Health Screening Tool

Effective May 23, 2021, the Minnesota State Health Screening Tool will no longer be required to enter colleges, universities, or the system office, and will no longer be available for campus use. Please remove references to the tool from your webpages and remove any campus signage referencing the tool.

Minnesota State is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer and educator

Campuses should place signage at all entrances that reinforce reminders for individuals to stay home and not enter campuses or system office spaces if they are sick or not feeling well. We are consulting with MDH and will share template posters that can be used.

Weekly Reporting
We will continue to require weekly reporting into the summer. This important information is submitted to MMB and used in monitoring our communities during the peacetime emergency. However, beginning with the reports due the week of May 31, we will no longer require the submission of *On-campus Dedicated Isolation and Quarantine Capacity and Utilization.* At that time, the Health Screening Tool data will be removed from the online systemwide dashboard. Throughout the summer we will evaluate the need for weekly reporting and decide in late summer about Fall semester 2021 reporting requirements.

Color-Coded Campus Safety Levels
Effective immediately, remove campus COVID-19 color-coded status from college and university websites.

Domestic Out-of-State Travel
Effective June 1, 2021, *approval of college/university sponsored domestic travel requests by students, faculty, or staff will revert to the campus president or their designee*. All travel will continue to be subject to adherence to guidance and local advisories. Because we know that travel guidance can and will change over the months ahead, the *Out-of-State Travel Request Form* has been updated to note that approval to travel is applicable at the time of actual travel. If you have your own campus travel forms, please update them to include this disclaimer. Updated travel information can be found at:

- Department of State:
  - General: International Travel (state.gov)
  - COVID Specific: COVID-19 Country Specific Information (state.gov)

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
  - International Travel During COVID-19 | CDC
  - COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Destination | CDC

- Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)
  - See Travel: Protect Yourself & Others: COVID-19 - Minnesota Dept. of Health

International Travel
Guidance suspending international travel has not changed from the last communication (February 23, 2021). For the 2021 Fall semester, campuses can continue to plan for future semester study abroad experiences and short-term study abroad trips. A decision tree has been shared which can help inform your planning decisions. Institutions should work with their leadership to determine if they would like to pursue an RFP or contract for study abroad or study away trips. The system office is not restricting campuses from engaging in this type of planning activity. However, institutions need to consider the many decision points in planning

for study abroad and study away that allow for opportunities to review the situation and act appropriately. We will continue to monitor changes to travel restrictions and provide updates, if and when the systemwide international travel ban is modified or rescinded.

For questions regarding student international travel, contact: Nate Hallanger, Nathan.Hallanger@MinnState.edu.