

Fall 2021 COVID-19 Management and Guidance Plans

Texas A&M University-Commerce will resume a pre-pandemic schedule of classes at full capacity for the fall semester. Considering rising national infection rates and recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [guidelines](#), the University asks the campus community to do its part to keep our campus and off-campus sites healthy and safe.

Students, faculty, and staff are **strongly encouraged** to get vaccinated, wear a mask in public indoor settings, and wash hands frequently. These actions can reduce the spread of COVID-19.

This document contains five requirements of all University community members to help mitigate the threat of COVID-19. It also includes other steps the University will take to keep the campus community safe.

The following five requirements will be in place this fall:

- **Students, faculty and staff must participate in the mandatory COVID-19 testing program at intervals designated by the university.**
- **Students, faculty and staff who test positive or have been identified as a close contact may be required to quarantine/isolate consistent with current CDC guidance as shown [here](#).**
- **Students, faculty and staff who test positive for COVID-19 are required to isolate. Those with COVID-19 symptoms or who have had close contact with someone (within 6 feet of someone for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) who received a positive test result for COVID-19 are required to email the A&M-Commerce Emergency Operations Center at eoc@tamuc.edu for additional guidance on how to proceed.**
- **All employees who have not already done so must complete the course assignment in TrainTraq - 2114130 Protocol & Certification for System Member Employees.**
- **Students new to the university must confirm they've read and agree to adhere to the following guidelines. Please click the following link to complete the acknowledgment: [COVID-19 Acknowledgment](#).**

We will continue to monitor the situation in communities surrounding our campus and instructional sites and the state as a whole. Please be on the lookout for future updates posted on the website [here](#).

Quarantine and Isolation Protocols

Quarantine

Quarantine if you have been in close contact (within 6 feet of someone for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) with someone who has COVID-19 unless you have

been fully vaccinated. People who are fully vaccinated do NOT need to quarantine after contact with someone who had COVID-19 unless they have symptoms. However, fully vaccinated people should get tested 3-5 days after their exposure, even if they don't have symptoms and wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until their test result is negative.

Isolation

You can be around others after:

- 10 days since symptoms first appeared **and**
- 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving*

**Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation.*

University Enforcement of Mandatory Testing, Reporting and Quarantine Protocols

Students who do not comply with mandatory COVID-19 reporting, testing and/or quarantine/isolation requirements will go through the [Student Conduct Process](#). This may result in a student facing possible separation (i.e., suspension or expulsion) from the University or being considered a student "not in good standing." A status of "not in good standing" renders the student subject to the following restrictions:

- a. Ineligible to hold an elected office in any student organization recognized by the university or to hold any elected or appointed office of the University.
- b. Ineligible to represent the university in any way, including representing the University at any official function, intercollegiate athletics or any form of intercollegiate competition or representation. This includes events taking place both on and off the university campus.
- c. Ineligible for fraternity, sorority or organization new member intake.
- d. Additional restrictions or conditions may also be imposed, depending on the nature and seriousness of the misconduct.

Faculty and staff who do not comply with mandatory COVID-19 reporting, testing and/or quarantine/isolation requirements will receive a written reprimand, at a minimum, that will impact their eligibility for merit increases and also will be subject to other, more severe, disciplinary action as appropriate.

Mandatory COVID-19 Testing

All students, staff and faculty are **required** to participate in A&M-Commerce's mandatory COVID-19 testing program. **Regardless of vaccination status, everyone will be required to submit to a COVID diagnostic test provided by the University between August 25-September 17, 2021.** Testing sites, hours of operations and additional information will be updated regularly on the University's home page found [here](#).

Testing will also be provided to University students and employees at off-site instructional sites.

COVID-19 testing will be available at no cost for Texas A&M University-Commerce students, faculty and staff. Lab results will typically be available in one to three days from when the test is taken, depending on which test is taken. All test results will be provided directly to the individual via email or phone call and automatically submitted to the University.

Testing performed by other entities off campus will **not** be accepted to meet the mandatory testing requirement. Effective testing results are one of the factors the administration considers in determining safety protocols.

Positive test results will be reported to the Department of State Health Services and the A&M-Commerce Emergency Operations Center. The EOC will utilize the self-report form, email and phone calls to contact those with positive cases, as appropriate to confirm case exposure and provide additional guidance.

Mandatory Self-Reporting

All members of the A&M-Commerce community - students, faculty and staff - are **required to report** a COVID-19 diagnosis, regardless of where tested or if you have had close contact with someone who tests positive. This can be done by emailing eoc@tamuc.edu. Prompt reporting is required and is essential to allow for proper contact tracing and help limit the potential spread of the virus.

Case Investigation, Quarantine and Contact Tracing

In addition to required self-reporting, cooperation with the A&M-Commerce Emergency Operations Center is required.

The self-report portal will collect vital information to assess your personal situation and guidance for best managing your healthcare experience. All information shared will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws.

Following self-report, a representative of the Emergency Operations Center will determine if an additional interview is required and provide additional guidance to each positive case related to isolation and quarantine. Quarantine/isolation guidance will be updated regularly in concert with local, state and federal public health guidance.

Quarantine/isolation for a close contact, identified by a positive case during the case investigation or as self-reported by emailing eoc@tamuc.edu, is dependent on vaccination status, symptoms experienced and ability to safely isolate/quarantine. Cases may not have to quarantine if they are fully vaccinated (two weeks since the final required dose of their selected vaccine).

Students testing positive for COVID-19 should assess personal needs for missed classes or assignments, consult course syllabi and contact course instructor of record to coordinate arrangements, as appropriate.

Faculty and staff who have to self-quarantine or isolate will be required to use their accrued leave under normal university policy and procedures if they are unable to work remotely.

Contract partners, vendors and visitors should consult their personal healthcare provider and supervisor for best managing isolation and quarantine.

Other Steps the University is Taking to Fight COVID-19

Vaccine Incentive Program and Availability

Vaccination remains the most effective way to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. According to the Department of State Health Services, 99.5 percent of people who died due to COVID-19 in Texas between February 8 and July 14, 2021, were unvaccinated.

Anyone age 12 and older is eligible for the [vaccine](#). Contact [Student Health Services](#) for information on current vaccine availability. There is no cost for students and employees. Alternatively, you may seek vaccination through your local health care provider including primary care physicians and pharmacies. Locate a vaccine provider near you on the CDC's [vaccine finder](#) website.

To encourage vaccination, drawings for students who submit proof of vaccination will be held throughout the fall semester. To be eligible for a **vaccine incentive drawing**, you must be a student enrolled for the fall 2021 semester at the main Texas A&M University-Commerce campus or any off campus instructional site, and you must provide valid proof of vaccination (either one or two shots depending on the vaccine). To submit your proof of vaccination, please click on the following link: [Vaccination Incentive Form](#).

Eligible Texas A&M University-Commerce students will be entered into a random drawing for a chance to win prizes. Complete rules for this drawing will be made available soon.

Enhanced Sanitization

SSC will provide sanitization to all instructional spaces, high-traffic locations, and restrooms. SSC will sanitize these spaces using sanitization products that meet the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) criteria for use against the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Any concerns or questions about the frequency or lack of attention to sanitization in an area should be directed to the EOC at EOC@tamuc.edu.

Supplies

In order to support the sanitization efforts needed to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, the university has procured a limited amount of product and supplies that meet the EPA's criteria to use against the SARS-CoV-2 virus to be available for students and employees. The university will continue to procure supplies throughout the semester to maintain the sanitization efforts. Departments requesting additional product or supplies can contact EOC@tamuc.edu.

The additional product and supplies include:

- Disinfectant spray
- Disinfectant wipes
- Hand sanitizer
- Hand sanitizer stations
- Paper Towels
- Plexiglass barriers
- Face coverings

Campus Life, Instructional Activities, and Travel

On-Campus Housing

Check-in: Check-in, by appointment only, starts August 26, 2021. All students must be checked in by August 29. Appointments can be viewed and rescheduled in the MyLEO Housing Portal. All Early Arrivals have been preassigned. All bacterial meningitis requirements must be met before move-in.

Students testing COVID-19 positive identified as first-person contacts must isolate or quarantine off campus unless given approval by Residential Living and Learning to remain on campus.

Classes

Please note that the extensive remote learning opportunities that were available last year will not be available as the semester starts.

If you must isolate or quarantine, you will need to contact your professors and make appropriate arrangements to complete assignments and stay current in your classes. Such arrangements are expected to be like those offered in the past for students who missed class due to illness or other urgent matters.

Faculty members will be responsible for determining appropriate arrangements for make-up work, etc.

Travel Guidance

For work-related domestic travel, faculty and staff should follow the pre-COVID-19 approval process. Work-related international travel by faculty and staff is allowed only for activities that are mission-critical for the university. All international travel requests need to be routed through Concur, and should be approved in advance by the faculty or staff member's respective Vice President (for faculty, Dr. John Humphreys, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs, has delegated this approval to the Deans). For more, read the [travel guidance](#) outlined by The Texas A&M University System.

Domestic and international student travel as part of a student organization must be routed through the Division of Campus Life and Student Success. Academic-related student travel must go through Risk Management after being deemed essential by the applicable Dean. Members of

the student organization whose travel is approved may need to undergo testing for COVID-19 or any other action that the Division of Campus Life and Student Success believes is necessary to protect the members' health and safety.

Exchange, affiliate provider, and independent programs

Students who will be participating in individual experiences through a provider or exchange partner are permitted to go as long as the host university or partner has confirmed that it is operational, and with the understanding that they do so at their own risk. Any financial loss incurred because of travel or health issues related to COVID-19 will not be reimbursed by the Office of International Programs or Texas A&M University-Commerce.

The Office of International Programs is monitoring federal and international travel advisories and restrictions, as well as guidelines from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO), and the [U.S. Department of State](#).

All questions or concerns regarding study abroad programs should be directed to studyabroad@tamuc.edu or call 903.868.5097. In-person and virtual appointments can also be scheduled with the Office of International Programs by emailing studyabroad@tamuc.edu.

Relevant Links below:

- [CDC COVID-19 Travel Recommendations by Destination](#)
- [CDC Travel Recommendations](#)
- [How CDC Determines the Level for COVID-19 Travel Health Notices](#)
- [International Travel during COVID-19](#)

For more information on document submission, click on [Checklist for Foreign Travel](#) and for all other information on study abroad, please visit [Faculty study abroad](#). All questions or concerns regarding study abroad programs should be directed to studyabroad@tamuc.edu.

International Travelers

Faculty, staff and students traveling from another country must follow Texas A&M University-Commerce's COVID-19 protocols **before arriving at A&M-Commerce**.

If you are vaccinated:

- You must submit proof of vaccination.
- You must also test 3-5 days after arriving in the U.S.
- Email your vaccination record and the test results to COVID.Vaccine@tamuc.edu.

If you are unvaccinated:

- After you arrive in the U.S., you must get tested within 3 to 5 days and must self-quarantine for 7 days.
- Email your test results to COVID.Vaccine@tamuc.edu.

- If you do not get tested, you must self-quarantine for 10 days. Please email the Emergency Operations Center at EOC@tamuc.edu if you do not plan to take the COVID-19 test.

If you are living On-Campus in the Residence Halls

- Prior to your arrival in the United States, you must notify [Residential Living & Learning](#) at RLLCOVID@tamuc.edu for information and guidance on your housing and quarantine.

Please contact the Office of International Programs at intl@tamuc.edu or call 903.886.5097 if you have questions or concerns.